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The Works

OF

Walter Pater

IN EIGHT VOLUMES

VIII

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES

Miscellaneous Studies

A Series of Essays

BY

WALTER PATER

FELLOW OF BRASENOSE COLLEGE

LONDON

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PREFACE

THE volume of *Greek Studies*, issued early in the present year, dealt with Mr. Pater's contributions to the study of Greek art, mythology, and poetry. The present volume has no such unifying principle. Some of the papers would naturally find their place alongside of those collected in *Imaginary Portraits*, or in *Appreciations*, or in the *Studies in the Renaissance*. And there is no doubt, in the case of several of them, that Mr. Pater, if he had lived, would have subjected them to careful revision before allowing them to reappear in a permanent form. The task, which he left unexecuted, cannot now be taken up by any other hand. But it is hoped that students of his writings will be glad to possess, in a collected shape, what has hitherto only been accessible in the scattered volumes of magazines. It is with some hesitation that the paper on *Diaphaneité*, the last in this volume, has been added, as the only specimen known to

be preserved of those early essays of Mr. Pater's, by which his literary gifts were first made known to the small circle of his Oxford friends.

Subjoined is a brief chronological list of his published writings. It will be observed how considerable a period, 1880 to 1885, was given up to the composition of *Marius the Epicurean*, the most highly finished of all his works, and the expression of his deepest thought.

1866.

COLERIDGE. Appeared in *Westminster Review*, January, 1866. Reprinted 1889 in *Appreciations*.

1867.

WINCKELMANN. Appeared in *Westminster Review*, January, 1867. Reprinted 1873 in *Studies in the Renaissance*.

1868.

AESTHETIC POETRY. Written in 1868. First published 1889 in *Appreciations*.

1869.

NOTES ON LEONARDO DA VINCI. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in November, 1869. Reprinted 1873 in *Stuaies in the Renaissance*.

1870.

SANDRO BOTTICELLI. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in August, 1870, entitled "A Fragment on Sandro Botticelli." Reprinted 1873 in *Studies in the Renaissance*.

1871.

PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in October, 1871. Reprinted in 1873 in *Studies in the Renaissance*.

POETRY OF MICHELANGELO. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in November, 1871. Reprinted in 1873 in *Studies in the Renaissance.*

1873.

STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THE RENAISSANCE. Published 1873 by Messrs. Macmillan. Contained :—

Aucassin and Nicolette. Entitled in second and later editions, "Two Early French Stories."
Pico della Mirandola. See 1871.
Sandro Botticelli. See 1870.
Luca della Robbia.
Poetry of Michelangelo. See 1871.
Leonardo da Vinci. See 1869.
Joachim du Bellay.
Winckelmann. See 1867.
Conclusion.

1874.

WORDSWORTH. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in April, 1874. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations.*

MEASURE FOR MEASURE. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in November, 1874. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations.*

1875.

DEMETER AND PERSEPHONE. Written as two lectures, and delivered in 1875 at the Birmingham and Midland Institute. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in January and February, 1876. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

1876.

ROMANTICISM. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in November, 1876. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations* under the title "Postscript."

A STUDY OF DIONYSUS. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in December, 1876. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

1877.

THE SCHOOL OF GIORGIONE. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in October, 1877. Reprinted in 1888 in third edition of *The Renaissance.*

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES

THE RENAISSANCE: STUDIES IN ART AND POETRY. Second edition. Messrs. Macmillan. Contained:—

Two Early French Stories.
Pico della Mirandola.
Sandro Botticelli.
Luca della Robbia.
The Poetry of Michelangelo.
Leonardo da Vinci.
Joachim du Bellay.
Winckelmann.

1878.

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in August, 1878, under the heading, "Imaginary Portrait. The Child in the House." Reprinted by Mr. H. Daniel at his private press, Oxford, in 1894. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

CHARLES LAMB. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in October, 1878. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations.*

LOVE'S LABOURS LOST. Written in 1878. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in December, 1885. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations.*

THE BACCHANALS OF EURIPIDES. Written in 1878. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in May, 1889. Reprinted in Tyrrell's edition of the *Bacchae* in 1892. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

1880.

THE BEGINNINGS OF GREEK SCULPTURE. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in February and March, 1880. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

THE MARBLES OF AEGINA. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in April, 1880. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

1883.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI. Written in 1883. Published in 1889 in *Appreciations.*

1885.

MARIUS THE EPICUREAN. Published in 1885 by Messrs. Macmillan. Two volumes.

PREFACE

A Prince of Court Painters. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in October, 1885. Reprinted in 1887 in *Imaginary Portraits*.

1886.

Feuillet's "La Morte." Written in 1886. Published in 1890 in second edition of *Appreciations*.

Sir Thomas Browne. Written in 1886. Published in 1889 in *Appreciations*.

Sebastian van Storck. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in March, 1886. Reprinted in 1887 in *Imaginary Portraits*.

Denys l'Auxerrois. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in October, 1886. Reprinted in 1887 in *Imaginary Portraits*.

1887.

Duke Carl of Rosenmold. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in May, 1887. Reprinted in the same year in *Imaginary Portraits*.

Imaginary Portraits. Published 1887 by Messrs. Macmillan. Contained :—

A Prince of Court Painters. See 1885.
Denys l'Auxerrois. See 1886.
Sebastian van Storck. See 1886.
Duke Carl of Rosenmold. See above.

1888.

Gaston de Latour. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* as under : viz.

Chapter I. in June.
II. in July.
III. in August.
IV. in September.
V. in October.

Style. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in December, 1888. Reprinted in 1889 in *Appreciations*.

The Renaissance. Third edition. Messrs. Macmillan. Contained :—

Two Early French Stories.
Pico della Mirandola.
Sandro Botticelli.
Luca della Robbia.

MISCELLANEOUS STUDIES

The Poetry of Michelangelo.
Leonardo da Vinci.
The School of Giorgione. See 1877.
Joachim du Bellay.
Winckelmann.
Conclusion.

1889.

HIPPOLYTUS VEILED. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in August, 1889. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

GIORDANO BRUNO. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in August, 1889.

APPRECIATIONS, WITH AN ESSAY ON STYLE. Published 1889 by Messrs. Macmillan. Contained :—

Style. See 1888.
Wordsworth. See 1874.
Coleridge. See 1866.
Charles Lamb. See 1878.
Sir Thomas Browne. See 1886.
Love's Labours Lost. See 1878.
Measure for Measure. See 1874.
Shakspere's English Kings.
Æsthetic Poetry. See 1868.
Dante Gabriel Rossetti. See 1883.
Postscript. See under "Romanticism," 1876.

1890.

ART NOTES IN NORTH ITALY. Appeared in *New Review* in November, 1890. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

PROSPER MÉRIMÉE. Delivered as a lecture at Oxford in November, 1890. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in December, 1890. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

APPRECIATIONS. Second edition. Messrs. Macmillan. Contained as in first edition 1889, but omitting *Æsthetic Poetry* and including a paper on *Feuillet's* "*La Morte*" (see 1886).

1892.

THE GENIUS OF PLATO. Appeared in *Contemporary Review* in February, 1892. Reprinted 1893 as Chapter VI. of *Plato and Platonism.*

A CHAPTER ON PLATO. Appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* in May, 1892. Reprinted 1893 as Chapter I. of *Plato and Platonism.*

PREFACE

LACEDÆMON. Appeared in *Contemporary Review* in June, 1892. Reprinted 1893 as Chapter VIII. of *Plato and Platonism.*

EMERALD UTHWART. Appeared in *New Review* in June and July, 1892. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

RAPHAEL. Delivered as a lecture at Oxford in August, 1892. Appeared in *Fortnightly Review* in October, 1892. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

1893.

APOLLO IN PICARDY. Appeared in *Harper's Magazine* in November, 1893. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

PLATO AND PLATONISM. Published 1893 by Messrs. Macmillan. Included, as Chapters I., VI., and VIII., papers which had already appeared in Magazines in 1892.

1894.

THE AGE OF ATHLETIC PRIZEMEN. Appeared in *Contemporary Review* in February, 1894. Reprinted in 1895 in *Greek Studies.*

SOME GREAT CHURCHES IN FRANCE—(1) NOTRE-DAME D'AMIENS; (2) VÉZELAY. Appeared in *Nineteenth Century* in March and June, 1894. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

PASCAL. Written for delivery as a lecture at Oxford in July, 1894. Appeared in *Contemporary Review* in December, 1894. Reprinted in 1895 in the present volume.

1895.

GREEK STUDIES. Published 1895 by Messrs. Macmillan. Contained :—

A Study of Dionysus. See 1876.
The Bacchanals of Euripides. See 1878.
The Myth of Demeter and Persephone. See 1875.
Hippolytus Veiled. See 1889.
The Beginnings of Greek Sculpture—See 1880—
I. *The Heroic Age of Greek Art.*
II. *The Age of Graven Images.*
The Marbles of Ægina. See 1880.
The Age of Athletic Prizemen. See 1894.

C. L. S.

August, 1895.

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PROSPER MÉRIMÉE[1]

For one born in eighteen hundred and three much was recently become incredible that had at least warmed the imagination even of the sceptical eighteenth century. Napoleon, sealing the tomb of the Revolution, had foreclosed many a problem, extinguished many a hope, in the sphere of practice. And the mental parallel was drawn by Heine. In the mental world too a great outlook had lately been cut off. After Kant's criticism of the mind, its pretensions to pass beyond the limits of individual experience seemed as dead as those of old French royalty. And Kant did but furnish its innermost theoretic force to a more general criticism, which had withdrawn from every department of action, underlying principles once thought eternal. A time of disillusion followed. The typical personality of the day was Obermann, the very genius of *ennui*, a Frenchman disabused even of patriotism, who has hardly strength enough to die.

[1] A lecture delivered at the Taylor Institution, Oxford, and at the London Institution. Published in the *Fortnightly Review*, Dec. 1890, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

More energetic souls, however, would recover themselves, and find some way of making the best of a changed world. Art: the passions, above all, the ecstasy and sorrow of love: a purely empirical knowledge of nature and man: these still remained, at least for pastime, in a world of which it was no longer proposed to calculate the remoter issues:—art, passion, science, however, in a somewhat novel attitude towards the practical interests of life. The *désillusionné*, who had found in Kant's negations the last word concerning an unseen world, and is living, on the morrow of the Revolution, under a monarchy made out of hand, might seem cut off from certain ancient natural hopes, and will demand, from what is to interest him at all, something in the way of artificial stimulus. He has lost that sense of large proportion in things, that all-embracing prospect of life as a whole (from end to end of time and space, it had seemed), the utmost expanse of which was afforded from a cathedral tower of the Middle Age: by the church of the thirteenth century, that is to say, with its consequent aptitude for the co-ordination of human effort. Deprived of that exhilarating yet pacific outlook, imprisoned now in the narrow cell of its own subjective experience, the action of a powerful nature will be intense, but exclusive and peculiar. It will come to art, or science, to the experience of life itself, not as to portions of human nature's daily food, but as to

something that must be, by the circumstances of the case, exceptional; almost as men turn in despair to gambling or narcotics, and in a little while the narcotic, the game of chance or skill, is valued for its own sake. The vocation of the artist, of the student of life or books, will be realised with something—say! of fanaticism, as an end in itself, unrelated, unassociated. The science he turns to will be a science of crudest fact; the passion extravagant, a passionate love of passion, varied through all the exotic phases of French fiction as inaugurated by Balzac; the art exaggerated, in matter or form, or both, as in Hugo or Baudelaire. The development of these conditions is the mental story of the nineteenth century, especially as exemplified in France.

In no century would Prosper Mérimée have been a theologian or metaphysician. But that sense of negation, of theoretic insecurity, was in the air, and conspiring with what was of like tendency in himself made of him a central type of disillusion. In him the passive *ennui* of Obermann became a satiric, aggressive, almost angry conviction of the littleness of the world around; it was as if man's fatal limitations constituted a kind of stupidity in him, what the French call *bêtise*. Gossiping friends, indeed, linked what was constitutional in him and in the age with an incident of his earliest years. Corrected for some childish fault, in passionate distress, he overhears a half-pitying laugh at his expense, and has determined,

in a moment, never again to give credit—to be for ever on his guard, especially against his own instinctive movements. Quite unreserved, certainly, he never was again. Almost everywhere he could detect the hollow ring of fundamental nothingness under the apparent surface of things. Irony surely, habitual irony, would be the proper complement thereto, on his part. In his infallible self-possession, you might even fancy him a mere man of the world, with a special aptitude for matters of fact. Though indifferent in politics, he rises to social, to political eminence; but all the while he is feeding all his scholarly curiosity, his imagination, the very eye, with the, to him ever delightful, relieving, reassuring spectacle, of those straightforward forces in human nature, which are also matters of fact. There is the formula of Mérimée! the enthusiastic amateur of rude, crude, naked force in men and women wherever it could be found; himself carrying ever, as a mask, the conventional attire of the modern world—carrying it with an infinite, contemptuous grace, as if that, too, were an all-sufficient end in itself. With a natural gift for words, for expression, it will be his literary function to draw back the veil of time from the true greatness of old Roman character; the veil of modern habit from the primitive energy of the creatures of his fancy, as the *Lettres à une Inconnue* discovered to general gaze, after his death, a certain depth of

passionate force which had surprised him in himself. And how forcible will be their outlines in an otherwise insignificant world! Fundamental belief gone, in almost all of us, at least some relics of it remain—queries, echoes, reactions, after-thoughts; and they help to make an atmosphere, a mental atmosphere, hazy perhaps, yet with many secrets of soothing light and shade, associating more definite objects to each other by a perspective pleasant to the inward eye against a hopefully receding background of remoter and ever remoter possibilities. Not so with Mérimée! For him the fundamental criticism has nothing more than it can do; and there are no half-lights. The last traces of hypothesis, of supposition, are evaporated. Sylla, the false Demetrius, Carmen, Colomba, that impassioned self within himself, have no atmosphere. Painfully distinct in outline, inevitable to sight, unrelieved, there they stand, like solitary mountain forms on some hard, perfectly transparent day. What Mérimée gets around his singularly sculpturesque creations is neither more nor less than empty space.

So disparate are his writings that at first sight you might fancy them only the random efforts of a man of pleasure or affairs, who, turning to this or that for the relief of a vacant hour, discovers to his surprise a workable literary gift, of whose scope, however, he is not precisely aware. His sixteen volumes nevertheless range themselves in three compact groups. There are his letters

—those *Lettres à une Inconnue*, and his letters to the librarian Panizzi, revealing him in somewhat close contact with political intrigue. But in this age of novelists, it is as a writer of novels, and of fiction in the form of highly descriptive drama, that he will count for most:—*Colomba*, for instance, by its intellectual depth of motive, its firmly conceived structure, by the faultlessness of its execution, vindicating the function of the novel as no tawdry light literature, but in very deed a fine art. The *Chronique du Règne de Charles IX.*, an unusually successful specimen of historical romance, links his imaginative work to the third group of Mérimée's writings, his historical essays. One resource of the disabused soul of our century, as we saw, would be the empirical study of facts, the empirical science of nature and man, surviving all dead metaphysical philosophies. Mérimée, perhaps, may have had in him the making of a master of such science, disinterested, patient, exact: scalpel in hand, we may fancy, he would have penetrated far. But quite certainly he had something of genius for the exact study of history, for the pursuit of exact truth, with a keenness of scent as if that alone existed, in some special area of historic fact, to be determined by his own peculiar mental preferences. Power here too again,—the crude power of men and women which mocks, while it makes its use of, average human nature: it was the magic function of history to put one in living

contact with that. To weigh the purely physiognomic import of the memoir, of the pamphlet saved by chance, the letter, the anecdote, the very gossip by which one came face to face with energetic personalities: there lay the true business of the historic student, not in that pretended theoretic interpretation of events by their mechanic causes, with which he dupes others if not invariably himself. In the great hero of the *Social War*, in Sylla, studied, indeed, through his environment, but only so far as that was in dynamic contact with himself, you saw, without any manner of doubt, on one side, the solitary height of human genius; on the other, though on the seemingly so heroic stage of antique Roman story, the wholly inexpressive level of the humanity of every day, the spectacle of man's eternal *bêtise*. Fascinated, like a veritable son of the old pagan Renaissance, by the grandeur, the concentration, the satiric hardness of ancient Roman character, it is to Russia nevertheless that he most readily turns—youthful Russia, whose native force, still unbelittled by our western civilisation, seemed to have in it the promise of a more dignified civilisation to come. It was as if old Rome itself were here again; as, occasionally, a new quarry is laid open of what was thought long since exhausted, ancient marble, *cipollino* or *verde antique*. Mérimée, indeed, was not the first to discern the fitness for imaginative service of the career of "the false Demetrius," pretended

son of Ivan the Terrible; but he alone seeks its utmost force in a calm, matter-of-fact carefully ascertained presentment of the naked events. Yes! In the last years of the Valois, when its fierce passions seemed to be bursting France to pieces, you might have seen, far away beyond the rude Polish dominion of which one of those Valois princes had become king, a display more effective still of exceptional courage and cunning, of horror in circumstance, of *bêtise*, of course, of *bêtise* and a slavish capacity of being duped, in average mankind: all that under a mask of solemn Muscovite court-ceremonial. And Mérimée's style, simple and unconcerned, but with the eye ever on its object, lends itself perfectly to such purpose—to an almost phlegmatic discovery of the facts, in all their crude natural colouring, as if he but held up to view, as a piece of evidence, some harshly dyed oriental carpet from the sumptuous floor of the Kremlin, on which blood had fallen.

A lover of ancient Rome, its great character and incident, Mérimée valued, as if it had been personal property of his, every extant relic of it in the art that had been most expressive of its genius—architecture. In that grandiose art of building, the most national, the most tenaciously rooted of all the arts in the stable conditions of life, there were historic documents hardly less clearly legible than the manuscript chronicle. By the mouth of those stately Romanesque

churches, scattered in so many strongly characterised varieties over the soil of France, above all in the hot, half-pagan south, the people of empire still protested, as he understood, against what must seem a smaller race. The Gothic enthusiasm indeed was already born, and he shared it—felt intelligently the fascination of the Pointed Style, but only as a further transformation of old Roman structure; the round arch is for him still the great architectural form, *la forme noble*, because it was to be seen in the monuments of antiquity. Romanesque, Gothic, the manner of the Renaissance, of Lewis the Fourteenth:—they were all, as in a written record, in the old abbey church of Saint-Savin, of which Mérimée was instructed to draw up a report. Again, it was as if to his concentrated attention through many months that deserted sanctuary of Benedict were the only thing on earth. Its beauties, its peculiarities, its odd military features, its faded mural paintings, are no merely picturesque matter for the pencil he could use so well, but the lively record of a human society. With what appetite! with all the animation of George Sand's *Mauprat*, he tells the story of romantic violence having its way there, defiant of law, so late as the year 1611; of the family of robber nobles perched, as abbots *in commendam*, in those sacred places. That grey, pensive old church in the little valley of Poitou, was for a time like *Santa Maria del Fiore* to

Michelangelo, the mistress of his affections—of a practical affection; for the result of his elaborate report was the Government grant which saved the place from ruin. In architecture, certainly, he had what for that day was nothing less than intuition—an intuitive sense, above all, of its logic, of the *necessity* which draws into one all minor changes, as elements in a reasonable development. And his care for it, his curiosity about it, were symptomatic of his own genius. Structure, proportion, design, a sort of architectural coherency: that was the aim of his method in the art of literature, in that form of it, especially, which he will live by, in fiction.

As historian and archæologist, as a man of erudition turned artist, he is well seen in the *Chronique du Règne de Charles IX.*, by which we pass naturally from Mérimée's critical or scientific work to the products of his imagination. What economy in the use of a large antiquarian knowledge! what an instinct amid a hundred details, for the detail that carries physiognomy in it, that really tells! And again what outline, what absolute clarity of outline! For the historian of that puzzling age which centres in the "Eve of Saint Bartholomew," outward events themselves seem obscured by the vagueness of motive of the actors in them. But Mérimée, disposing of them as an artist, not in love with half-lights, compels events and actors alike to the clearness he

desired; takes his side without hesitation; and makes his hero a Huguenot of pure blood, allowing its charm, in that charming youth, even to Huguenot piety. And as for the incidents—however freely it may be undermined by historic doubt, all reaches a perfectly firm surface, at least for the eye of the reader. The *Chronicle of Charles the Ninth* is like a series of masterly drawings in illustration of a period—the period in which two other masters of French fiction have found their opportunity, mainly by the development of its actual historic characters. Those characters—Catherine de Medicis and the rest—Mérimée, with significant irony and self-assertion, sets aside, preferring to think of them as essentially commonplace. For him the interest lies in the creatures of his own will, who carry in them, however, so lightly! a learning equal to Balzac's, greater than that of Dumas. He knows with like completeness the mere fashions of the time—how courtier and soldier dressed themselves, and the large movements of the desperate game which fate or chance was playing with those pretty pieces. Comparing that favourite century of the French Renaissance with our own, he notes a decadence of the more energetic passions in the interest of general tranquillity, and perhaps (only perhaps!) of general happiness. "Assassination," he observes, as if with regret, "is no longer a part of our manners." In fact, the duel, and the whole

morality of the duel, which does but enforce a certain regularity on assassination, what has been well called *le sentiment du fer*, the sentiment of deadly steel, had then the disposition of refined existence. It was, indeed, very different, and *is*, in Mérimée's romance. In his gallant hero, Bernard de Mergy, all the promptings of the lad's virile goodness are in natural collusion with that *sentiment du fer*. Amid his ingenuous blushes, his prayers, and plentiful tears betweenwhile, it is a part of his very sex. With his delightful, fresh-blown air, he is for ever tossing the sheath from the sword, but always as if into bright natural sunshine. A winsome, yet withal serious and even piteous figure, he conveys his pleasantness, in spite of its gloomy theme, into Mérimée's one quite cheerful book.

Cheerful, because, after all, the gloomy passions it presents are but the accidents of a particular age, and not like the mental conditions in which Mérimée was most apt to look for the spectacle of human power, allied to madness or disease in the individual. For him, at least, it was the office of fiction to carry one into a different if not a better world than that actually around us; and if the *Chronicle of Charles the Ninth* provided an escape from the tame circumstances of contemporary life into an impassioned past, *Colomba* is a measure of the resources for mental alteration which may be found even in the modern age. There was a corner of

the French Empire, in the manners of which assassination still had a large part.

"The beauty of Corsica," says Mérimée, "is grave and sad. The aspect of the capital does but augment the impression caused by the solitude that surrounds it. There is no movement in the streets. You hear there none of the laughter, the singing, the loud talking, common in the towns of Italy. Sometimes, under the shadow of a tree on the promenade, a dozen armed peasants will be playing cards, or looking on at the game. The Corsican is naturally silent. Those who walk the pavement are all strangers: the islanders stand at their doors: every one seems to be on the watch, like a falcon on its nest. All around the gulf there is but an expanse of tanglework; beyond it, bleached mountains. Not a habitation! Only, here and there, on the heights about the town, certain white constructions detach themselves from the background of green. They are funeral chapels or family tombs."

Crude in colour, sombre, taciturn, Corsica, as Mérimée here describes it, is like the national passion of the Corsican—that morbid personal pride, usurping the place even of grief for the dead, which centuries of traditional violence had concentrated into an all-absorbing passion for bloodshed, for bloody revenges, in collusion with the natural wildness, and the wild social condition of the island still unaffected even by the finer

ethics of the duel. The supremacy of that passion is well indicated by the cry, put into the mouth of a young man in the presence of the corpse of his father deceased in the course of nature—a young man meant to be commonplace. "Ah! Would thou hadst died *malamorte* —by violence! We might have avenged thee!" In Colomba, Mérimée's best known creation, it is united to a singularly wholesome type of personal beauty, a natural grace of manner which is irresistible, a cunning intellect patiently diverting every circumstance to its design; and presents itself as a kind of genius, allied to fatal disease of mind. The interest of Mérimée's book is that it allows us to watch the action of this malignant power on Colomba's brother, Orso della Rebbia, as it discovers, rouses, concentrates to the leaping-point, in the somewhat weakly diffused nature of the youth, the dormant elements of a dark humour akin to her own. Two years after his father's murder, presumably at the instigation of his ancestral enemies, the young lieutenant is returning home in the company of two humorously conventional English people, himself now half Parisianised, with an immense natural cheerfulness, and willing to believe an account of the crime which relieves those hated Barricini of all complicity in its guilt. But from the first, Colomba, with "voice soft and musical," is at his side, gathering every accident and echo and circumstance, the very lightest circumstance,

into the chain of necessity which draws him to the action every one at home expects of him as the head of his race. He is not unaware. Her very silence on the matter speaks so plainly. "You are forming me!" he admits. "Well! 'Hot shot, or cold steel!'—you see I have not forgotten my Corsican." More and more, as he goes on his way with her, he finds himself accessible to the damning thoughts he has so long combated. In horror, he tries to disperse them by the memory of his comrades in the regiment, the drawing-rooms of Paris, the English lady who has promised to be his bride, and will shortly visit him in the humble *manoir* of his ancestors. From his first step among them the villagers of Pietranera, divided already into two rival camps, are watching him in suspense—Pietranera, perched among those deep forests where the stifled sense of violent death is everywhere. Colomba places in his hands the little chest which contains the father's shirt covered with great spots of blood. "Behold the lead that struck him!" and she laid on the shirt two rusted bullets. "Orso! you will avenge him!" She embraces him with a kind of madness, kisses wildly the bullets and the shirt, leaves him with the terrible relics already exerting their mystic power upon him. It is as if in the nineteenth century a girl, amid Christian habits, had gone back to that primitive old pagan version of the story of the Grail, which

identifies it not with the Most Precious Blood, but only with the blood of a murdered relation crying for vengeance. Awake at last in his old chamber at Pietranera, the house of the Barricini at the other end of the square, with its rival tower and rudely carved escutcheons, stares him in the face. His ancestral enemy is there, an aged man now, but with two well-grown sons, like two stupid dumb animals, whose innocent blood will soon be on his so oddly lighted conscience. At times, his better hope seemed to lie in picking a quarrel and killing at least in fair fight, one of these two stupid dumb animals; with rude ill-suppressed laughter one day, as they overhear Colomba's violent utterances at a funeral feast, for she is a renowned *improvisatrice*. "Your father is an old man," he finds himself saying, "I could crush with my hands. 'Tis for you I am destined, for you and your brother!" And if it is by course of nature that the old man dies not long after the murder of these sons (self-provoked after all), dies a fugitive at Pisa, as it happens, by an odd accident, in the presence of Colomba, no violent death by Orso's own hand could have been more to her mind. In that last hard page of Mérimée's story, mere dramatic propriety itself for a moment seems to plead for the forgiveness, which from Joseph and his brethren to the present day, as we know, has been as winning in story as in actual life. Such dramatic propriety, however, was by no means

in Mérimée's way. "What I must have is the hand that fired the shot," she had sung, "the eye that guided it; aye! and the *mind* moreover —the mind, which had conceived the deed!" And now, it is in idiotic terror, a fugitive from Orso's vengeance, that the last of the Barricini is dying.

Exaggerated art! you think. But it was precisely such exaggerated art, intense, unrelieved, an art of fierce colours, that is needed by those who are seeking in art, as I said of Mérimée, a kind of artificial stimulus. And if his style is still impeccably correct, cold-blooded, impersonal, as impersonal as that of Scott himself, it does but conduce the better to his one exclusive aim. It is like the polish of the stiletto Colomba carried always under her mantle, or the beauty of the fire-arms, that beauty coming of nice adaptation to purpose, which she understood so well—a task characteristic also of Mérimée himself, a sort of fanatic joy in the perfect pistol-shot, at its height in the singular story he has translated from the Russian of Pouchkine. Those raw colours he preferred; Spanish, Oriental, African, perhaps, irritant certainly to cisalpine eyes, he undoubtedly attained the colouring you associate with sun-stroke, only possible under a sun in which dead things rot quickly.

Pity and terror, we know, go to the making of the essential tragic sense. In Mérimée, certainly, we have all its terror, but without the

pity. Saint-Clair, the consent of his mistress barely attained at last, rushes madly on self-destruction, that he may die with the taste of his great love fresh on his lips. All the grotesque accidents of violent death he records with visual exactness, and no pains to relieve them; the ironic indifference, for instance, with which, on the scaffold or the battle-field, a man will seem to grin foolishly at the ugly rents through which his life has passed. Seldom or never has the mere pen of a writer taken us so close to the cannon's mouth as in the *Taking of the Redoubt*, while *Matteo Falcone*—twenty-five short pages—is perhaps the cruellest story in the world.

Colomba, that strange, fanatic being, who has a code of action, of self-respect, a conscience, all to herself, who with all her virginal charm only does not make you hate her, is, in truth, the type of a sort of humanity Mérimée found it pleasant to dream of—a humanity as alien as the animals, with whose moral affinities to man his imaginative work is often directly concerned. Were they so alien, after all? Were there not survivals of the old wild creatures in the gentlest, the politest of us? Stories that told of sudden freaks of gentle, polite natures, straight back, *not* into Paradise, were always welcome to men's fancies; and that could only be because they found a psychologic truth in them. With much success, with a credibility insured by his literary tact, Mérimée tried his own hand at such stories: unfrocked the

bear in the amorous young Lithuanian noble, the wolf in the revolting peasant of the Middle Age. There were survivals surely in himself, in that stealthy presentment of his favourite themes, in his own art. You seem to find your hand on a serpent, in reading him.

In such survivals, indeed, you see the operation of his favourite motive, the sense of wild power, under a sort of mask, or assumed habit, realised as the very genius of nature itself; and that interest, with some superstitions closely allied to it, the belief in the vampire, for instance, is evidenced especially in certain pretended Illyrian compositions—prose translations, the reader was to understand, of more or less ancient popular ballads; *La Guzla*, he called the volume, *The Lyre*, as we might say; only that the instrument of the Illyrian minstrel had but one string. Artistic deception, a trick of which there is something in the historic romance as such, in a book like his own *Chronicle of Charles the Ninth*, was always welcome to Mérimée; it was part of the machinery of his rooted habit of intellectual reserve. A master of irony also, in *Madame Lucrezia* he seems to wish to expose his own method cynically; to explain his art—how he takes you in—as a clever, confident conjuror might do. So properly were the readers of *La Guzla* taken in that he followed up his success in that line by the *Theatre of Clara Gazul*, purporting to be from a rare Spanish original, the work

of a nun, who, under tame, conventual reading, had felt the touch of mundane, of physical passions; had become a dramatic poet, and herself a powerful actress. It may dawn on you in reading her that Mérimée was a kind of Webster, but with the superficial mildness of our nineteenth century. At the bottom of the true drama there is ever, logically at least, the ballad: the ballad dealing in a kind of short-hand (or, say! in grand, simple, universal outlines) with those passions, crimes, mistakes, which have a kind of fatality in them, a kind of necessity to come to the surface of the human *mind*, if not to the surface of our *experience*, as in the case of some frankly supernatural incidents which Mérimée re-handled. Whether human love or hatred has had most to do in shaping the universal fancy that the dead come back, I cannot say. Certainly that old ballad literature has instances in plenty, in which the voice, the hand, the brief visit from the grave, is a natural response to the cry of the human creature. That ghosts should return, as they do so often in Mérimée's fiction, is but a sort of natural justice. Only, in Mérimée's prose ballads, in those admirable, short, ballad-like stories, where every word tells, of which he was a master, almost the inventor, they are a kind of half-material ghosts —a vampire tribe—and never come to do people good; congruously with the mental constitution of the writer, which, alike in fact and fiction,

could hardly have horror enough—theme after theme. Mérimée himself emphasises this almost constant motive of his fiction when he adds to one of his volumes of short stories some letters on a matter of fact—a Spanish bull-fight, in which those old Romans, he regretted, might seem, decadently, to have survived. It is as if you saw it. In truth, Mérimée was the unconscious parent of much we may think of dubious significance in later French literature. It is as if there were nothing to tell of in this world but various forms of hatred, and a love that is like lunacy; and the only other world, a world of maliciously active, hideous, dead bodies.

Mérimée, a literary artist, was not a man who used two words where one would do better, and he shines especially in those brief compositions which, like a minute intaglio, reveal at a glance his wonderful faculty of design and proportion in the treatment of his work, in which there is not a touch but counts. That is an art of which there are few examples in English; our somewhat diffuse, or slipshod, literary language hardly lending itself to the concentration of thought and expression, which are of the essence of such writing. It is otherwise in French, and if you wish to know what art of that kind can come to, read Mérimée's little romances; best of all, perhaps, *La Vénus d'Ille* and *Arsène Guillot.* The former is a modern version of the beautiful old story of the Ring given to Venus, given to her, in

this case, by a somewhat sordid creature of the nineteenth century, whom she looks on with more than disdain. The strange outline of the Canigou, one of the most imposing outlying heights of the Pyrenees, down the mysterious slopes of which the traveller has made his way towards nightfall into the great plain of Toulouse, forms an impressive background, congruous with the many relics of irrepressible old paganism there, but in entire contrast to the *bourgeois* comfort of the place where his journey is to end, the abode of an aged antiquary, loud and bright just now with the celebration of a vulgar worldly marriage. In the midst of this well-being, prosaic in spite of the neighbourhood, in spite of the pretty old wedding customs, morsels of that local colour in which Mérimée delights, the old pagan powers are supposed to reveal themselves once more (malignantly, of course), in the person of a magnificent bronze statue of Venus recently unearthed in the antiquary's garden. On her finger, by ill-luck, the coarse young bridegroom on the morning of his marriage places for a moment the bridal ring only too effectually (the bronze hand closes, like a wilful living one, upon it), and dies, you are to understand, in her angry metallic embraces on his marriage night. From the first, indeed, she had seemed bent on crushing out men's degenerate bodies and souls, though the supernatural horror of the tale is adroitly made credible by a certain vagueness in the

events, which covers a quite natural account of the bridegroom's mysterious death.

The intellectual charm of literary work so thoroughly designed as Mérimée's depends in part on the sense as you read, hastily perhaps, perhaps in need of patience, that you are dealing with a composition, the full secret of which is only to be attained in the last paragraph, that with the last word in mind you will retrace your steps, more than once (it may be) noting then the minuter structure, also the natural or wrought flowers by the way. Nowhere is such method better illustrated than by another of Mérimée's quintessential pieces, *Arsène Guillot*, and here for once with a conclusion ethically acceptable also. Mérimée loved surprises in human nature, but it is not often that he surprises us by tenderness or generosity of character, as another master of French fiction, M. Octave Feuillet, is apt to do; and the simple pathos of *Arsène Guillot* gives it a unique place in Mérimée's writings. It may be said, indeed, that only an essentially pitiful nature could have told the exquisitely cruel story of Matteo Falcone precisely as Mérimée has told it; and those who knew him testify abundantly to his own capacity for generous friendship. He was no more wanting than others in those natural sympathies (sending tears to the eyes at the sight of suffering age or childhood) which happily are no extraordinary component in men's natures. It was, perhaps, no fitting return for a

friendship of over thirty years to publish posthumously those *Lettres à une Inconnue*, which reveal that reserved, sensitive, self-centred nature, a little pusillanimously in the power, at the disposition of another. For just there lies the interest, the psychological interest, of those letters. An amateur of power, of the spectacle of power and force, followed minutely but without sensibility on his part, with a kind of cynic pride rather for the mainspring of his method, both of thought and expression, you find him here taken by surprise at last, and somewhat humbled, by an unsuspected force of affection in himself. His correspondent, unknown but for these letters except just by name, figures in them as, in truth, a being only too much like himself, seen from one side; reflects his taciturnity, his touchiness, his incredulity except for self-torment. Agitated, dissatisfied, he is wrestling in her with himself, his own difficult qualities. He demands from her a freedom, a frankness, he would have been the last to grant. It is by first thoughts, of course, that what is forcible and effective in human nature, the force, therefore, of carnal love, discovers itself; and for her first thoughts Mérimée is always pleading, but always complaining that he gets only her second thoughts; the thoughts, that is, of a reserved, self-limiting nature, well under the yoke of convention, like his own. Strange conjunction! At the beginning of the correspondence he seems to have been

seeking only a fine intellectual companionship; the lady, perhaps, looking for something warmer. Towards such companionship that likeness to himself in her might have been helpful, but was not enough of a complement to his own nature to be anything but an obstruction in love; and it is to that, little by little, that his humour turns. He—the *Megalopsychus*, as Aristotle defines him—acquires all the lover's humble habits: himself displays all the tricks of love, its casuistries, its exigency, its superstitions, aye! even its vulgarities; involves with the significance of his own genius the mere hazards and inconsequence of a perhaps average nature; but too late in the day—the years. After the attractions and repulsions of half a lifetime, they are but friends, and might forget to be that, but for his death, clearly presaged in his last weak, touching letter, just two hours before. There, too, had been the blind and naked force of nature and circumstance, surprising him in the uncontrollable movements of his own so carefully guarded heart.

The intimacy, the effusion, the so freely exposed personality of those letters does but emphasise the fact that *impersonality* was, in literary art, Mérimée's central aim. Personality *versus* impersonality in art:—how much or how little of one's self one may put into one's work: whether anything at all of it: whether one *can* put there anything else:—is clearly a far-reaching and complex question. Serviceable as

the basis of a precautionary maxim towards the conduct of our work, self-effacement, or impersonality, in literary or artistic creation, is, perhaps, after all, as little possible as a strict realism. "It has always been my rule to put nothing of myself into my works," says another great master of French prose, Gustave Flaubert; but, luckily as we may think, he often failed in thus effacing himself, as he too was aware. "It has always been my rule to put nothing of myself into my works" (to be *disinterested* in his literary creations, so to speak), "yet I have put much of myself into them": and where he failed Mérimée succeeded. There they stand—Carmen, Colomba, the "False" Demetrius—as detached from him as from each other, with no more filial likeness to their maker than if they were the work of another person. And to his method of conception, Mérimée's much-praised literary style, his method of expression, is strictly conformable—impersonal in its beauty, the perfection of nobody's style—thus vindicating anew by its very impersonality that much worn, but not untrue saying, that the style is the man: —a man, impassible, unfamiliar, impeccable, veiling a deep sense of what is forcible, nay, terrible, in things, under the sort of personal pride that makes a man a nice observer of all that is most conventional. Essentially unlike other people, he is always fastidiously in the fashion—an expert in all the little, half-

contemptuous elegances of which it is capable. Mérimée's superb self-effacement, his impersonality, is itself but an effective personal trait, and, transferred to art, becomes a markedly peculiar quality of literary beauty. For, in truth, this creature of disillusion who had no care for half-lights, and, like his creations, had no atmosphere about him, gifted as he was with pure *mind*, with the quality which secures flawless literary structure, had, on the other hand, nothing of what we call *soul* in literature :—hence, also, that singular harshness in his ideal, as if, in theological language, he were incapable of grace. He has none of those subjectivities, colourings, peculiarities of mental refraction, which necessitate *varieties* of style—could we spare such ?—and render the perfections of it no merely negative qualities. There are masters of French prose whose art has begun where the art of Mérimée leaves off.

RAPHAEL[1]

By his immense productiveness, by the even perfection of what he produced, its fitness to its own day, its hold on posterity, in the suavity of his life, some would add in the "opportunity" of his early death, Raphael may seem a signal instance of the luckiness, of the good fortune, of genius. Yet, if we follow the actual growth of his powers, within their proper framework, the age of the Renaissance—an age of which we may say, summarily, that it enjoyed itself, and found perhaps its chief enjoyment in the attitude of the scholar, in the enthusiastic acquisition of knowledge for its own sake:—if we thus view Raphael and his works in their environment we shall find even his seemingly mechanical good fortune hardly distinguishable from his own patient disposal of the means at hand. Facile master as he may seem, as indeed he is, he is also one of the world's typical scholars, with

[1] A lecture delivered to the University Extension Students, Oxford, 2 August, 1892. Published in the *Fortnightly Review*, Oct. 1892, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

Plato, and Cicero, and Virgil, and Milton. The *formula* of his genius, if we must have one, is *this:* genius by accumulation; the transformation of meek scholarship into genius—triumphant power of genius.

Urbino, where this prince of the Renaissance was born in 1483, year also of the birth of Luther, leader of the other great movement of that age, the Reformation—Urbino, under its dukes of the house of Montefeltro, had wherewithal just then to make a boy of native artistic faculty from the first a willing learner. The gloomy old fortress of the feudal masters of the town had been replaced, in those later years of the *Quattro-cento*, by a consummate monument of *Quattro-cento* taste, a museum of ancient and modern art, the owners of which lived there, gallantly at home, amid the choicer flowers of living humanity. The ducal palace was, in fact, become nothing less than a school of ambitious youth in all the accomplishments alike of war and peace. Raphael's connexion with it seems to have become intimate, and from the first its influence must have overflowed so small a place. In the case of the lucky Raphael, for once, the actual conditions of early life had been suitable, propitious, accordant to what one's imagination would have required for the childhood of the man. He was born amid the art he was, not to transform, but to perfect, by a thousand reverential retouchings. In no palace, however, but

in a modest abode, still shown, containing the workshop of his father, Giovanni Santi. But here, too, though in frugal form, art, the arts, were present. A store of artistic objects was, or had recently been, made there, and now especially, for fitting patrons, religious pictures in the old Umbrian manner. In quiet nooks of the Apennines Giovanni's works remain; and there is one of them, worth study, in spite of what critics say of its crudity, in the National Gallery. Concede its immaturity, at least, though an immaturity visibly susceptible of a delicate grace, it wins you nevertheless to return again and again, and ponder, by a sincere expression of sorrow, profound, yet resigned, be the cause what it may, among all the many causes of sorrow inherent in the ideal of maternity, human or divine. But if you keep in mind when looking at it the facts of Raphael's childhood, you will recognise in his father's picture, not the anticipated sorrow of the "Mater Dolorosa" over the dead son, but the grief of a simple household over the mother herself taken early from it. That may have been the first picture the eyes of the world's great painter of Madonnas rested on; and if he stood diligently before it to copy, and so copying, quite unconsciously, and with no disloyalty to his original, refined, improved, substituted,—substituted himself, in fact, his finer self—he had already struck the persistent note of his career. As with his age, it is

his vocation, ardent worker as he is, to enjoy himself—to enjoy himself amiably, and to find his chief enjoyment in the attitude of a scholar. And one by one, one after another, his masters, the very greatest of them, go to school to him.

It was so especially with the artist of whom Raphael first became certainly a learner—Perugino. Giovanni Santi had died in Raphael's childhood, too early to have been in any direct sense his teacher. The lad, however, from one and another, had learned much, when, with his share of the patrimony in hand, enough to keep him, but not to tempt him from scholarly ways, he came to Perugia, hoping still further to improve himself. He was in his eighteenth year, and how he looked just then you may see in a drawing of his own in the University Galleries, of somewhat stronger mould than less genuine likenesses may lead you to expect. There is something of a fighter in the way in which the nose springs from the brow between the wide-set, meditative eyes. A strenuous lad! capable of plodding, if you dare apply that word to labour so impassioned as his—to any labour whatever done at Perugia, centre of the dreamiest Apennine scenery. Its various elements (one hardly knows whether one is thinking of Italian nature or of Raphael's art in recounting them), the richly-planted lowlands, the sensitive mountain lines in flight one beyond the other into clear distance, the cool yet glowing atmo-

sphere, the romantic morsels of architecture, which lend to the entire scene I know not what expression of reposeful antiquity, arrange themselves here as for set purpose of pictorial effect, and have gone with little change into his painted backgrounds. In the midst of it, on titanic old Roman and Etruscan foundations, the later Gothic town had piled itself along the lines of a gigantic land of rock, stretched out from the last slope of the Apennines into the plain. Between its fingers steep dark lanes wind down into the olive gardens; on the finger-tips military and monastic builders had perched their towns. A place as fantastic in its attractiveness as the human life which then surged up and down in it in contrast to the peaceful scene around. The Baglioni who ruled there had brought certain tendencies of that age to a typical completeness of expression, veiling crime—crime, it might seem, for its own sake, a whole octave of fantastic crime—not merely under brilliant fashions and comely persons, but under fashions and persons, an outward presentment of life and of themselves, which had a kind of immaculate grace and discretion about them, as if Raphael himself had already brought his unerring gift of selection to bear upon it all for motives of art. With life in those streets of Perugia, as with nature, with the work of his masters, with the mere exercises of his fellow-students, his hand rearranges, refines, renews, as if by simple contact;

but it is met here half-way in its renewing office by some special aptitude for such grace in the subject itself. Seemingly innocent, full of natural gaiety, eternally youthful, those seven and more deadly sins, embodied and attired in just the jaunty dress then worn, enter now and afterwards as spectators, or assistants, into many a sacred foreground and background among the friends and kinsmen of the Holy Family, among the very angels, gazing, conversing, standing firmly and unashamed. During his apprenticeship at Perugia Raphael visited and left his work in more modest places round about, along those seductive mountain or lowland roads, and copied for one of them Perugino's "Marriage of the Virgin" significantly, did it by many degrees better, with a very novel effect of motion everywhere, and with that grace which natural motion evokes, introducing for a temple in the background a lovely bit of his friend Bramante's sort of architecture, the true Renaissance or perfected *Quattro-cento* architecture. He goes on building a whole lordly new city of the like as he paints to the end of his life. The subject, we may note, as we leave Perugia in Raphael's company, had been suggested by the famous mystic treasure of its cathedral church, the marriage ring of the Blessed Virgin herself.

Raphael's copy had been made for the little old Apennine town of Città di Castello; and another place he visits at this time is still more

effective in the development of his genius. About his twentieth year he comes to Siena—that other rocky Titan's hand, just lifted out of the surface of the plain. It is the most grandiose place he has yet seen; it has not forgotten that it was once the rival of Florence; and here the patient scholar passes under an influence of somewhat larger scope than Perugino's. Perugino's pictures are for the most part religious contemplations, painted and made visible, to accompany the action of divine service—a visible pattern to priests, attendants, worshippers, of what the course of their invisible thoughts should be at those holy functions. Learning in the workshop of Perugino to produce the like—such works as the Ansidei Madonna—to produce them very much better than his master, Raphael was already become a freeman of the most strictly religious school of Italian art, the so devout Umbrian soul finding there its purest expression, still untroubled by the naturalism, the intellectualism, the antique paganism, then astir in the artistic soul everywhere else in Italy. The lovely work of Perugino, very lovely at its best, of the early Raphael also, is in fact "conservative," and at various points slightly behind its day, though not unpleasantly. In Perugino's allegoric frescoes of the *Cambio*, the Hall of the Money-changers, for instance, under the mystic rule of the Planets in person, pagan personages take their place indeed side by side with the figures of the New

Testament, but are no Romans or Greeks, neither are the Jews Jews, nor is any one of them, warrior, sage, king, precisely of Perugino's own time and place, but still contemplations only, after the manner of the personages in his church-work; or, say, dreams—monastic dreams—thin, do-nothing creatures, conjured from sky and cloud. Perugino clearly never broke through the meditative circle of the Middle Age.

Now Raphael, on the other hand, in his final period at Rome, exhibits a wonderful narrative power in painting; and the secret of that power —the power of developing a story in a picture, or series of pictures—may be traced back from him to Pinturicchio, as that painter worked on those vast, well-lighted walls of the cathedral library at Siena, at the great series of frescoes illustrative of the life of Pope Pius the Second. It had been a brilliant personal history, in contact now and again with certain remarkable public events—a career religious yet mundane, you scarcely know which, so natural is the blending of lights, of interest in it. How unlike the Peruginesque conception of life in its almost perverse other-worldliness, which Raphael now leaves behind him, but, like a true scholar, will not forget. Pinturicchio then had invited his remarkable young friend hither, "to assist him by his counsels," who, however, pupil-wise, after his habit also learns much as he thus assists. He stands depicted there in person in the scene

of the canonisation of Saint Catherine; and though his actual share in the work is not to be defined, connoisseurs have felt his intellectual presence, not at one place only, in touches at once finer and more forcible than were usual in the steady-going, somewhat Teutonic, Pinturicchio, Raphael's elder by thirty years. The meek scholar you see again, with his tentative sketches and suggestions, had more than learned his lesson; through all its changes that flexible intelligence loses nothing; does but add continually to its store. Henceforward Raphael will be able to tell a story in a picture, better, with a truer economy, with surer judgment, more naturally and easily than any one else.

And here at Siena, of all Italian towns perhaps most deeply impressed with medieval character—an impress it still retains—grotesque, parti-coloured—parti-coloured, so to speak, in its genius—Satanic, yet devout of humour, as depicted in its old chronicles, and beautiful withal, dignified; it is here that Raphael becomes for the first time aware of that old pagan world, which had already come to be so much for the art-schools of Italy. There were points, as we saw, at which the school of Perugia was behind its day. Amid those intensely Gothic surroundings in the cathedral library where Pinturicchio worked, stood, as it remained till recently, unashamed there, a marble group of the three Graces—an average Roman work, in

effect—the sort of thing we are used to. That, perhaps, is the only reason why for our part, except with an effort, we find it conventional or even tame. For the youthful Raphael, on the other hand, at that moment, antiquity, as with "the dew of herbs," seemed therein "to awake and sing" out of the dust, in all its sincerity, its cheerfulness and natural charm. He has turned it into a picture; has helped to make his original only too familiar, perhaps, placing the three sisters against his own favourite, so unclassic, Umbrian background indeed, but with no trace of the Peruginesque ascetic, Gothic meagreness in themselves; emphasising rather, with a hearty acceptance, the nude, the flesh; making the limbs, in fact, a little heavy. It was but one gleam he had caught just there in medieval Siena of that large pagan world he was, not so long afterwards, more completely than others to make his own. And when somewhat later he painted the exquisite, still Peruginesque, Apollo and Marsyas, semi-medieval habits again asserted themselves with delightfully blent effects. It might almost pass for a parable—that little picture in the Louvre—of the contention between classic art and the romantic, superseded in the person of Marsyas, a homely, quaintly poetical young monk, surely! Only, Apollo himself also is clearly of the same brotherhood; has a touch, in truth, of Heine's fancied Apollo "in exile," who, Christianity now triumphing, has served as

a hired shepherd, or hidden himself under the cowl in a cloister; and Raphael, as if at work on choir-book or missal, still applies symbolical gilding for natural sunlight. It is as if he wished to proclaim amid newer lights—this scholar who never forgot a lesson—his loyal pupilage to Perugino, and retained still something of medieval stiffness, of the monastic thoughts also, that were born and lingered in places like Borgo San Sepolcro or Città di Castello. *Chef-d'œuvre!* you might exclaim, of the peculiar, tremulous, half-convinced, monkish treatment of that after all damnable pagan world. And our own generation certainly, with kindred tastes, loving or wishing to love pagan art as sincerely as did the people of the Renaissance, and medieval art as well, would accept, of course, of work conceived in that so seductively mixed manner, ten per cent of even Raphael's later, purely classical presentments.

That picture was suggested by a fine old intaglio in the Medicean collection at Florence, was painted, therefore, after Raphael's coming thither, and therefore also a survival with him of a style limited, immature, literally provincial; for in the phase on which he had now entered he is under the influence of style in its most fully determined sense, of what might be called the thorough-bass of the pictorial art, of a fully realised intellectual system in regard to its processes, well tested by experiment, upon a survey

of all the conditions and various applications of it—of style as understood by Da Vinci, then at work in Florence. Raphael's sojourn there extends from his twenty-first to his twenty-fifth year. He came with flattering recommendations from the Court of Urbino; was admitted as an equal by the masters of his craft, being already in demand for work, then and ever since duly prized; was, in fact, already famous, though he alone is unaware—is in his own opinion still but a learner, and as a learner yields himself meekly, systematically to influence; would learn from Francia, whom he visits at Bologna; from the earlier naturalistic works of Masolino and Masaccio; from the solemn prophetic work of the venerable dominican, Bartolommeo, disciple of Savonarola. And he has already habitually this strange effect, not only on the whole body of his juniors, but on those whose manner had been long since formed; they lose something of themselves by contact with him, as if they went to school again.

Bartolommeo, Da Vinci, were masters certainly of what we call "the ideal" in art. Yet for Raphael, so loyal hitherto to the traditions of Umbrian art, to its heavy weight of hieratic tradition, dealing still somewhat conventionally with a limited, non-natural matter—for Raphael to come from Siena, Perugia, Urbino, to sharp-witted, practical, masterful Florence was in immediate effect a transition from reverie to

realities—to a world of facts. Those masters of the ideal were for him, in the first instance, masters also of realism, as we say. Henceforth, to the end, he will be the analyst, the faithful reporter, in his work, of what he *sees*. He will realise the function of style as exemplified in the practice of Da Vinci, face to face with the world of nature and man as they are; selecting from, asserting one's self in a transcript of its veritable *data;* like drawing to like there, in obedience to the master's preference for the embodiment of the creative form within him. Portrait-art had been nowhere in the school of Perugino, but it was the triumph of the school of Florence. And here a faithful analyst of what he sees, yet lifting it withal, unconsciously, inevitably, recomposing, glorifying, Raphael too becomes, of course, a painter of portraits. We may foresee them already in masterly series, from Maddalena Doni, a kind of younger, more virginal sister of La Gioconda, to cardinals and popes—to that most sensitive of all portraits, the "Violin-player," if it be really his. But then, on the other hand, the influence of such portraiture will be felt also in his inventive work, in a certain reality there, a certain convincing loyalty to experience and observation. In his most elevated religious work he will still keep, for security at least, close to nature, and the truth of nature. His modelling of the visible surface is lovely because he understands, can see the hidden causes

of momentary action in the face, the hands—how men and animals are really made and kept alive. Set side by side, then, with that portrait of Maddalena Doni, as forming together a measure of what he has learned at Florence, the "Madonna del Gran Duca," which still remains there. Call it on revision, and without hesitation, the loveliest of his Madonnas, perhaps of all Madonnas; and let it stand as representative of as many as fifty or sixty types of that subject, onwards to the Sixtine Madonna, in all the triumphancy of his later days at Rome. Observe the veritable atmosphere about it, the grand composition of the drapery, the magic relief, the sweetness and dignity of the human hands and faces, the noble tenderness of Mary's gesture, the unity of the thing with itself, the faultless exclusion of all that does not belong to its main purpose; it is like a single, simple axiomatic thought. Note withal the novelty of its effect on the mind, and you will see that this master of style (that's a consummate example of what is meant by *style*) has been still a willing scholar in the hands of Da Vinci. But then, with what ease also, and simplicity, and a sort of natural success not his!

It was in his twenty-fifth year that Raphael came to the city of the popes, Michelangelo being already in high favour there. For the remaining years of his life he paces the same streets with that grim artist, who was so great a

contrast with himself, and for the first time his attitude towards a gift different from his own is not that of a scholar, but that of a rival. If he did not become the scholar of Michelangelo, it would be difficult, on the other hand, to trace anywhere in Michelangelo's work the counter influence usual with those who had influenced him. It was as if he desired to add to the strength of Michelangelo that sweetness which at first sight seems to be wanting there. *Ex forti dulcedo:* and in the study of Michelangelo certainly it is enjoyable to detect, if we may, sweet savours amid the wonderful strength, the strangeness and potency of what he pours forth for us: with Raphael, conversely, something of a relief to find in the suavity of that so softly moving, tuneful existence, an assertion of strength. There was the promise of it, as you remember, in his very look as he saw himself at eighteen; and you know that the lesson, the prophecy of those holy women and children he has made his own, is that "the meek shall possess." So, when we see him at Rome at last, in that atmosphere of greatness, of the strong, he too is found putting forth strength, adding that element in due proportion to the mere sweetness and charm of his genius; yet a sort of strength, after all, still congruous with the line of development that genius has hitherto taken, the special strength of the scholar and his proper reward, a purely cerebral strength —

the strength, the power of an immense understanding.

Now the life of Raphael at Rome seems as we read of it hasty and perplexed, full of undertakings, of vast works not always to be completed, of almost impossible demands on his industry, in a world of breathless competition, amid a great company of spectators, for great rewards. You seem to lose him, feel he may have lost himself, in the multiplicity of his engagements; might fancy that, wealthy, variously decorated, a courtier, cardinal *in petto*, he was "serving tables." But, you know, he was forcing into this brief space of years (he died at thirty-seven) more than the natural business of the larger part of a long life; and one way of getting some kind of clearness into it, is to distinguish the various divergent outlooks or applications, and group the results of that immense intelligence, that still untroubled, flawlessly operating, completely informed understanding, that purely cerebral power, acting through his executive, inventive or creative gifts, through the eye and the hand with its command of visible colour and form. In that way you may follow him along many various roads till brain and eye and hand suddenly fail in the very midst of his work—along many various roads, but you can follow him along each of them distinctly.

At the end of one of them is the *Galatea*, and in quite a different form of industry, the *datum*

for the beginnings of a great literary work of pure erudition. Coming to the capital of Christendom, he comes also for the first time under the full influence of the antique world, pagan art, pagan life, and is henceforth an enthusiastic archæologist. On his first coming to Rome a papal bull had authorised him to inspect all ancient marbles, inscriptions, and the like, with a view to their adaptation in new buildings then proposed. A consequent close acquaintance with antiquity, with the very touch of it, blossomed literally in his brain, and, under his facile hand, in artistic creations, of which the *Galatea* is indeed the consummation. But the frescoes of the Farnese palace, with a hundred minor designs, find their place along that line of his artistic activity; they do not exhaust his knowledge of antiquity, his interest in and control of it. The mere fragments of it that still cling to his memory would have composed, had he lived longer, a monumental illustrated survey of the monuments of ancient Rome.

To revive something of the proportionable spirit at least of antique building in the architecture of the present, came naturally to Raphael as the son of his age; and at the end of another of those roads of diverse activity stands Saint Peter's, though unfinished. What a proof again of that immense intelligence, by which, as I said, the element of strength supplemented the element of mere sweetness and charm in his

work, that at the age of thirty, known hitherto only as a painter, at the dying request of the venerable Bramante himself, he should have been chosen to succeed him as the director of that vast enterprise! And if little in the great church, as we see it, is directly due to him, yet we must not forget that his work in the Vatican also was partly that of an architect. In the Loggie, or open galleries of the Vatican, the last and most delicate effects of *Quattro-cento* taste come from his hand, in that peculiar arabesque decoration which goes by his name.

Saint Peter's, as you know, had an indirect connexion with the Teutonic reformation. When Leo X. pushed so far the sale of indulgences to the overthrow of Luther's Catholicism, it was done after all for the not entirely selfish purpose of providing funds to build the metropolitan church of Christendom with the assistance of Raphael; and yet, upon another of those diverse outways of his so versatile intelligence, at the close of which we behold his unfinished picture of the Transfiguration, what has been called Raphael's Bible finds its place—that series of biblical scenes in the Loggie of the Vatican. And here, while he has shown that he could do something of Michelangelo's work a little more soothingly than he, this graceful Roman Catholic rivals also what is perhaps best in the work of the rude German reformer—of Luther, who came to Rome about this very

time, to find nothing admirable there. Place along with them the Cartoons, and observe that in this phase of his artistic labour, as Luther printed his vernacular German version of the Scriptures, so Raphael is popularising them for an even larger world; he brings the simple, to their great delight, face to face with the Bible as it is, in all its variety of incident, after they had so long had to content themselves with but fragments of it, as presented in the symbolism and in the brief lections of the Liturgy :—*Biblia Pauperum*, in a hundred forms of reproduction, though designed for popes and princes.

But then, for the wise, at the end of yet another of those divergent ways, glows his painted philosophy in the *Parnassus* and the *School of Athens*, with their numerous accessories. In the execution of those works, of course, his antiquarian knowledge stood him in good stead; and here, above all, is the pledge of his immense understanding, at work on its own natural ground on a purely intellectual deposit, the apprehension, the transmission to others of complex and difficult ideas. We have here, in fact, the sort of intelligence to be found in Lessing, in Herder, in Hegel, in those who, by the instrumentality of an organised philosophic system, have comprehended in one view or vision what poetry has been, or what Greek philosophy, as great complex dynamic facts in the world. But then, with the artist of the sixteenth century,

this synoptic intellectual power worked in perfect identity with the pictorial imagination and a magic hand. By him large theoretic conceptions are addressed, so to speak, to the intelligence of the eye. There had been efforts at such abstract or theoretic painting before, or say rather, leagues behind him. Modern efforts, again, we know, and not in Germany alone, to do the like for that larger survey of such matters which belongs to the philosophy of our own century; but for one or many reasons they have seemed only to prove the incapacity of philosophy to be expressed in terms of art. They have seemed, in short, so far, not fit to be seen literally—those ideas of culture, religion, and the like. Yet Plato, as you know, supposed a kind of visible loveliness about ideas. Well! in Raphael, painted ideas, painted and visible philosophy, are for once as beautiful as Plato thought they must be, if one truly apprehended them. For note, above all, that with all his wealth of antiquarian knowledge in detail, and with a perfect technique, it is after all the beauty, the grace of poetry, of pagan philosophy, of religious faith that he thus records.

Of religious faith also. The *Disputa*, in which, under the form of a council representative of all ages, he embodies the idea of theology, *divinarum rerum notitia*, as constantly resident in the Catholic Church, ranks with the "Parnassus" and the "School of Athens," if it does not rather

close another of his long lines of intellectual travail—a series of compositions, partly symbolic, partly historical, in which the "Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison," the "Expulsion of the Huns," and the "Coronation of Charlemagne," find their places; and by which, painting in the great official chambers of the Vatican, Raphael asserts, interprets the power and charm of the Catholic ideal as realised in history. A scholar, a student of the visible world, of the natural man, yet even more ardently of the books, the art, the life of the old pagan world, the age of the Renaissance, through all its varied activity, had, in spite of the weakened hold of Catholicism on the critical intellect, been still under its influence, the glow of it, as a religious ideal, and in the presence of Raphael you cannot think it a mere after-glow. Independently, that is, of less or more evidence for it, the whole creed of the Middle Age, as a scheme of the world as it should be, as we should be glad to find it, was still welcome to the heart, the imagination. Now, in Raphael, all the various conditions of that age discover themselves as characteristics of a vivid personal genius, which may be said therefore to be conterminous with the genius of the Renaissance itself. For him, then, in the breadth of his immense cosmopolitan intelligence, for Raphael, who had done in part the work of Luther also, the Catholic Church—through all its phases, as reflected in its visible local centre,

the papacy—is alive still as of old, one and continuous, and still true to itself. Ah! what is local and visible, as you know, counts for so much with the artistic temper!

Old friends, or old foes with but new faces, events repeating themselves, as his large, clear, synoptic vision can detect, the invading King of France, Louis XII., appears as Attila: Leo X. as Leo I.: and he thinks of, he sees, at one and the same moment, the coronation of Charlemagne and the interview of Pope Leo with Francis I., as a dutiful son of the Church: of the deliverance of Leo X. from prison, and the deliverance of St. Peter.

I have abstained from anything like description of Raphael's pictures in speaking of him and his work, have aimed rather at preparing you to look at his work for yourselves, by a sketch of his life, and therein especially, as most appropriate to this place, of Raphael as a scholar. And now if, in closing, I commend one of his pictures in particular to your imagination or memory, your purpose to see it, or see it again, it will not be the Transfiguration nor the Sixtine Madonna, nor even the "Madonna del Gran Duca," but the picture we have in London—the Ansidei, or Blenheim, Madonna. I find there, at first sight, with something of the pleasure one has in a proposition of Euclid, a sense of the power of the understanding, in the economy with which he has reduced his material to the

simplest terms, has disentangled and detached its various elements. He is painting in Florence, but for Perugia, and sends it a specimen of its own old art—Mary and the babe enthroned, with St. Nicolas and the Baptist in attendance on either side. The kind of thing people there had already seen so many times, but done better, in a sense not to be measured by degrees, with a wholly original freedom and life and grace, though he perhaps is unaware, done better as a whole, because better in every minute particular, than ever before. The scrupulous scholar, aged twenty-three, is now indeed a master; but still goes carefully. Note, therefore, how much mere exclusion counts for in the positive effect of his work. There is a saying that the true artist is known best by what he omits. Yes, because the whole question of good taste is involved precisely in such jealous omission. Note this, for instance, in the familiar Apennine background, with its blue hills and brown towns, faultless, for once—for once only—and observe, in the Umbrian pictures around, how often such background is marred by grotesque, natural, or architectural detail, by incongruous or childish incident. In this cool, pearl-grey, quiet place, where colour tells for double—the jewelled cope, the painted book in the hand of Mary, the chaplet of red coral—one is reminded that among all classical writers Raphael's preference was for the faultless Virgil. How orderly, how divinely

clean and sweet the flesh, the vesture, the floor, the earth and sky! Ah, say rather the hand, the method of the painter! There is an unmistakeable pledge of strength, of movement and animation in the cast of the Baptist's countenance, but reserved, repressed. Strange, Raphael has given him a staff of transparent crystal. Keep then to that picture as the embodied formula of Raphael's genius. Amid all he has here already achieved, full, we may think, of the quiet assurance of what is to come, his attitude is still that of the scholar; he seems still to be saying, before all things, from first to last, "I am utterly purposed that I will not offend."

PASCAL[1]

About the middle of the seventeenth century, two opposite views of a question, upon which neither Scripture, nor Council, nor Pope, had spoken with authority—the question as to the amount of freedom left to man by the overpowering work of divine grace upon him—had seemed likely for a moment to divide the Roman Church into two rival sects. In the diocese of Paris, however, the controversy narrowed itself into a mere personal quarrel between the Jesuit Fathers and the religious community of Port-Royal, and might have been forgotten but for the intervention of a new writer in whom French literature made more than a new step. It became at once, as if by a new creation, what it has remained—a pattern of absolutely unencumbered expressiveness.

In 1656 Pascal, then thirty-three years old, under the form of "Letters to a Provincial by one of his Friends," put forth a series of

[1] Published in the *Contemporary Review*, Feb. 1895, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

pamphlets in which all that was vulnerable in the Jesuit Fathers was laid bare to the profit of their opponents. At the moment the quarrel turned on the proposed censure of Antoine Arnauld by the Sorbonne, by the University of Paris as a religious body. Pascal, intimate, like many another fine intellect of the day, with the Port-Royalists, was Arnauld's friend, and it belonged to the ardour of his genius, at least as he was then, to be a very active friend. He took up the pen as other chivalrous gentlemen of the day took up the sword, and showed himself a master of the art of fence therewith. His delicate exercise of himself with that weapon was nothing less than a revelation to all the world of the capabilities, the true genius of the French language in prose.

Those who think of Pascal in his final sanctity, his detachment of soul from all but the greatest matters, may be surprised, when they turn to the "Letters," to find him treating questions, as serious for the friends he was defending as for their adversaries, ironically, with a but half-veiled disdain for them, or an affected humility at being unskilled in them and no theologian. He does not allow us to forget that he is, after all, a layman ; while he introduces us, almost avowedly, into a world of unmeaning terms, and unreal distinctions and suppositions that can never be verified. The world in general, indeed, *se paye des paroles*. That saying belongs to Pascal, and

he uses it with reference to the Jesuits and their favourite expression of "sufficient grace." In the earliest "Letters" he creates in us a feeling that, however orthodox one's intention, it is scarcely possible to speak of the matters then so abundantly discussed by religious people without heresy at some unguarded point. The suspected proposition of Arnauld, it is admitted by one of his foes, "would be Catholic in the mouth of any one but M. Arnauld. "The truth," as it lay between Arnauld and his opponents, is a thing so delicate that "*pour peu qu'on s'en retire, on tombe dans l'erreur ; mais cette erreur est si déliée, que, pour peu qu'on s'en éloigne, on se trouve dans la vérité.*"

Some, indeed, may find in the very delicacy, the curiosity, with which such distinctions are drawn, by Pascal's friends as well as by their foes, only the impertinence, the profanities, of the theologian by profession, all too intimate in laying down the law of the things he deals with —the things "which eye hath not seen"— pressing into the secrets of God's sublime commerce with men, in which, it may be, He differs with every single human soul, by forms of thought adapted from the poorest sort of men's dealings with each other, from the trader, or the attorney. Pascal notes too the "impious buffooneries" of his opponents. The good Fathers, perhaps, only meant them to promote geniality of temper in the debate. But of such failures—failures of taste, of respect towards one's

own point of view—the world is ever unamiably aware; and in the "Letters" there is much to move the self-complacent smile of the worldling, as Pascal describes his experiences, while he went from one authority to another to find out what was really meant by the distinction between grace "sufficient," grace "efficacious," grace "active," grace "victorious." He heard, for instance, that all men have sufficient grace to do God's will; but it is not always *prochain*, not always at hand, at the moment of temptation to do otherwise. So far, then, Pascal's charges are those which may seem to lie ready to hand against all who study theology, a looseness of thought and language, that would pass nowhere else, in making what are professedly very fine distinctions; the insincerity with which terms are carefully chosen to cover opposite meanings; the fatuity with which opposite meanings revolve into one another, in the strange vacuous atmosphere generated by professional divines.

Up to this point, you see, Pascal is the countryman of Rabelais and Montaigne, smiling with the fine malice of the one, laughing outright with the gaiety of the other, all the world joining in the laugh—well, at the silliness of the clergy, who seem indeed not to know their own business. It is we, the laity, he would urge, who are serious, and disinterested, because sincerely interested, in these great questionings. *Jalousie de métier*, the reader may suspect, has something to do with

the professional leaders on both sides of the controversy; but at the actual turn controversy took just then, it was against the Jesuit Fathers that Pascal's charges came home in full force. And their sin is above all that sin, unpardonable with men of the world *sans peur et sans reproche*, of a lack of self-respect, sins against pride, if the paradox may be allowed, all the undignified faults, in a word, of essentially little people when they interfere in great matters—faults promoted in the direction of the consciences of women and children, weak concessions to weak people who want to be saved in some easy way quite other than Pascal's high, fine, chivalrous way of gaining salvation, an incapacity to say what one thinks with the glove thrown down. He supposes a Jansenist to turn upon his opponent who uses the term "sufficient" grace, while really meaning, as he alleges, *insufficient*, with the words: "Your explanation would be odious to men of the world. They speak more sincerely than you on matters of far less importance than this." With the world, Pascal, in the "Provincial Letters," had immediate success. "All the world," we read in his friend's supposed reply to the second "Letter," "sees them; all the world understands them. Men of the world find them agreeable, and even women intelligible." A century later Voltaire found them very agreeable. The spirit in which Pascal deals with his opponents, his irony, may remind us of the "Apology" of

Socrates; the style which secured them immediate access to people who, as a rule, find the subjects there treated hopelessly dry, reminds us of the "Apologia" of Newman.

The essence of all good style, whatever its accidents may be, is expressiveness. It is mastered in proportion to the justice, the nicety with which words balance or match their meaning, and their writer succeeds in saying what he *wills*, grave or gay, severe or florid, simple or complex. Pascal was a master of style because, as his sister tells us, recording his earliest years, he had a wonderful natural facility *à dire ce qu'il voulait en la manière qu'il voulait.*

Facit indignatio versus. The indignation which caused Pascal to write the "Letters" was of a supercilious kind, and what he willed to say in them led to the development of all those qualities that are summed up in the French term *l'esprit.* Voltaire declared that the best comedies of Molière *n'ont pas plus de sel que les premières lettres.* "*Vos maximes,*" Pascal assures the Jesuit Fathers, "*ont je ne sais quoi de divertissant, qui réjouit toujours le monde,*" and they lose nothing of that character in his handling of them, so much so that it was clear from the first that the world in general would never ask whether Pascal had been quite fair to his opponents: "*N'êtes-vous donc pas ridicules, mes Pères? Qu'on satisfait au précepte d'ouïr la messe en entendant quatre quarts de messe à la fois de différents prêtres!*" When

you have the like of that it is impossible not to laugh, *parce que rien n'y porte davantage qu'une disproportion surprenante entre ce qu'on attend et ce qu'on voit.*

He has "salt" also, of another kind. He drives straight at the Jesuits, for instance, rather than at those who do but copy them, because, as he tells us: *Les choses valent toujours mieux dans leur source.* What equity of expression, how brief, how untranslateable! And the "Letters" abound in such things.

But to his comparison of Pascal with Molière, Voltaire added that Bossuet *n'a rien de plus sublime que les dernières.* And in truth the more serious note of the impassioned servant of religion whose lips have been touched with altar-fire, whose seriousness came to be like some incurable malady, a visitation of God, as people used to say, is presently struck when, in the natural course of his argument, his thoughts are carried, from a mere passage of arms between one man or one class of men and another, deep down to those awful encounters of the individual soul with itself which are formulated in the eternal problem of predestination.

In their doctrine of "sufficient grace" the Jesuits had presented a view of the conflict of good and evil in the soul, which is honourable to God and encouraging to man, and which has catholicity on its face. All to whom entrance into the Church, through its formal ministries,

lies open are truly called of God, while beyond it stretches the ocean of "His uncovenanted mercies." That is a doctrine for the many, for those whose position in the religious life is mediocrity, who so far as themselves or others can discern have nothing about them of eternal or necessary or irresistible reprobation, or of the eternal condition opposite to that.

The so-called Jansenist doctrine, on the other hand, of [ ] but irresistible grace was the appropriate view of the Port-Royalists, high-pitched, eager souls as they were, and of their friend Pascal himself, however much in his turn he might refine upon it. Whether or not, as a matter of fact, upon which, as distinct from matters of faith, an infallible pope can be mistaken, the dreary old Dutch bishop Jansenius had really taught Jansenism, the Port-Royalists had found in his "Augustinus" an incentive to devotion, and were avowedly his adherents. In that somewhat gloomy, that too deeply impressed, that fanatical age, they were the Calvinists of the Roman Catholic Church, maintaining, emphasising in it a view, a tradition, really constant in it from St. Augustin, from St. Paul himself. It is a merit of Pascal, his literary merit, to have given a very fine-toned expression to that doctrine, though mainly in the way of a criticism of its opponents, to one side or aspect of an eternal controversy, eternally suspended, as representing two opposite aspects of experience

itself. Calvin and Arminius, Jansen and Molina sum up, in fact, respectively, like the respective adherents of the freedom or of the necessity of the human will, in the more general question of moral philosophy, two opposed, two counter trains of phenomena actually observable by us in human action, too large and complex a matter, as it is, to be embodied or summed up in any one single proposition or idea.

There are moments of one's own life, aspects of the life of others, of which the conclusion that the will is free seems to be the only—is the natural or reasonable—account. Yet those very moments on reflexion, on second thoughts, present themselves again, as but links in a chain, in an all-embracing network of chains. In all education we assume, in some inexplicable combination, at once the freedom and the necessity of the subject of it. And who on a survey of life from outside would willingly lose the dramatic contrasts, the alternating interests, for which the opposed ideas of freedom and necessity are our respective points of view? How significant become the details we might otherwise pass by almost unobserved, but to which we are put on the alert by the abstract query whether a man be indeed a freeman or a slave, as we watch from aside his devious course, his struggles, his final tragedy or triumph. So much value at least there may be in problems insoluble in themselves, such as that great controversy of Pascal's day

between Jesuit and Jansenist. And here again who would forego, in the spectacle of the religious history of the human soul, the aspects, the details which the doctrines of universal and particular grace respectively embody? The Jesuit doctrine of sufficient grace is certainly, to use the familiar expression, a very pleasant doctrine conducive to the due feeding of the whole flock of Christ, as being, as assuming them to be, what they really are, at the worst, God's silly sheep. It has something in it congruous with the rising of the physical sun on the evil and on the good, while the wheat and the tares grow naturally, peacefully together. But how pleasant also the opposite doctrine, how true, how truly descriptive of certain distinguished, magnifical, or elect souls, vessels of election, *épris des hauteurs*, as we see them pass across the world's stage, as if led on by a kind of thirst for God! Its necessary counterpart, of course, we may find, at least dramatically true of some; we can name them in history, perhaps from our own experience; souls of whom it seems but an obvious story to tell that *they* seemed to be in love with eternal death, to have borne on them from the first signs of reprobation. Of certain quite visibly elect souls, at all events, the theory of irresistible grace might seem the almost necessary explanation. Most reasonable, most natural, most truly is it descriptive of Pascal himself.

So far, indeed, up to the year 1656, Pascal's *annus mirabilis*, the year of the "Letters," the world had been allowed to see only one side of him. Early in life he had achieved brilliant overtures in the abstract sciences, and, inheriting much of the quality of a fine gentleman, he figures, with his trenchant manner, never at a loss, as a quite secular person, stirred on occasion to take part in a religious debate. But it is after the grand fashion of the mundane quarrels of that day, the age of the sentiment of personal honour, in which it was so natural for the good-natured Jesuits, stirring all Pascal's satiric power, to excuse as well as they could the act *de tuer pour un simple médisance*. The Church was still an estate of the realm with all the obligations of the *noblesse*, and it was still something worse than bad taste, it was dangerous to express religious doubts. About the Catholic religion, as he conceived it, Pascal displays the assured attitude of an ancient Crusader. He has the full courage of his opinions, and by his elegant easy gallantry in speaking for it he gives to religion then and now a kind of dignity it had lost with other controversialists in the eyes of the world. There is abundant gaiety also in the "Letters." He quotes from Tertullian to the effect that *c'est proprement à la vérité qu'il appartient de rire parce qu'elle est gaie, et de se jouer de ses ennemis parce qu'elle est assurée de sa victoire*. For he could find quotations to his purpose from recondite writers,

though he was not a man of erudition; like a man of the world again, he read little, but that absorbingly, was the master of two authors, Epictetus and Montaigne, and, as appeared afterwards, of the Scriptures in the Vulgate.

So far, his imposing carriage of himself intellectually might lead us to suspect that the forced humilities of his later years are indirectly a discovery of what seems one leading quality of the natural man in him, a pride that could be quite fierce on occasion. And, like another rich young man whom Jesus loved, he lacked nothing to make the world also love and confide in, as it already flattered, him. He turned from it, decided to live a single life. Was it the mere oddity of genius? Or its last fine dainty touch of difference from ordinary people and their motives? Or that sanctity of which, in some cases, the world itself instinctively feels the distinction, though it shrinks from the true explanation of it? Certainly, all things considered, on the morrow of the "Letters," Blaise Pascal, at the age of thirty-three, had a brilliant worldly future before him, had he cared duly to wait upon, to serve it. To develop the already considerable position of his family among the gentry of Auvergne would have been to follow the way of his time, in which so many noble names had been founded on professional talents. Increasingly, however, from early youth, he had been the subject of a malady so hopeless

and inexplicable that in that superstitious age some fancied it the result of a malign spell in infancy. Gradually, the world almost loses sight of him, hears at last, some time after it had looked for that event, that he had died, of course very piously, among those sombre people, his friends and relations of Port-Royal, with whom he had taken refuge, and seemed already to have been buried alive. And in the year 1670, not till eight years after his death, the "Pensées" appeared—"Pensées de M. Pascal sur la Religion et sur quelques autres sujets"—or rather a selection from those "Thoughts" by the Port-Royalists, still in fear of consequences to the struggling Jansenist party, anxious to present Pascal's doctrine as far as possible in conformity with the Jesuit sense, as also to divert the vaguer parts of it more entirely into their own. The incomparable words were altered, the order changed or lost, the thoughts themselves omitted or retrenched. Written in short intervals of relief from suffering, they were contributions to a large and methodical work—"Pensées de M. Pascal sur la Religion et sur quelques autres sujets"—on a good many things besides, as the reader finds, on many of the great things of this world which seemed to him to come in contact or competition with religion. In the true version of the "Thoughts," edited at last by Faugère, in 1844, from Pascal's own MSS., in the National Library, they group themselves into certain definite trains

of speculation and study. But it is still, nevertheless, as isolated thoughts, as inspirations, so to call them, penetrating what seemed hopelessly dark, summarising what seemed hopelessly confused, sticking fast in men's memories, floating lightly, or going far, that they have left so deep a mark in literature. For again the manner, also, their style precisely becomes them. The merits of Pascal's style, indeed, as of the French language itself, still is to say *beaucoup de choses en peu de mots ;* and the brevity, the discerning edge, the impassioned concentration of the language are here one with the ardent immediate apprehensions of his spirit.

One of the literary merits of the "Provincial Letters" is that they are really like letters; they are essentially a *conversation* by writing with other persons. What we have in the "Thoughts" is the conversation of the writer with himself, with himself and with God, or rather concerning Him, for He is, in Pascal's favourite phrase from the Vulgate, *Deus absconditus*, He who never directly shows Himself. *Choses de cœur* the "Thoughts" are, indeed those of an individual, though they seem to have determined the very outlines of a great subject for all other persons. In Pascal, at the summit of the Puy de Dôme in his native Auvergne, experimenting on the weight of the invisible air, proving it to be ever all around by its effects, we are presented with one of the more pleasing

aspects of his earlier, more wholesome, open-air life. In the great work of which the "Thoughts" are the first head, Pascal conceived himself to be doing something of the same kind in the spiritual order by a demonstration of this other invisible world all around us, with its really ponderable forces, its movement, its attractions and repulsions, the world of grace, unseen, but, as he thinks, the one only hypothesis that can explain the experienced, admitted facts. Whether or not he was fixing permanently in the "Pensées" the outlines, the principles, of a great system of assent, of conviction, for acceptance by the intellect, he was certainly fixing these with all the imaginative depth and sufficiency of Shakespeare himself, the fancied opposites, the attitudes, the necessary forms of πάθος, of a great tragedy in the heart, the soul, the essential human tragedy, as typical and central in its expression here, as *Hamlet*—what the soul passes, and must pass, through, *aux abois* with nothingness, or with those offended mysterious powers that may really occupy it—or when confronted with the thought of what are called the "four last things" it yields this way or that. What might have passed with all its fiery ways for an *esprit de secte et de cabale* is now revealed amid the disputes not of a single generation but of eternal ones, by the light of a phenomenal storm of blinding and blasting inspirations.

Observe, he is not a sceptic converted, a returned infidel, but is seen there as if at the very centre of a perpetually maintained tragic crisis holding the faith steadfastly, but amid the well-poised points of essential doubt all around him and it. It is no mere calm supersession of a state of doubt by a state of faith; the doubts never die, they are only just kept down in a perpetual *agonia*. Everywhere in the "Letters" he had seemed so great a master—a master of himself—never at a loss, taking the conflict so lightly, with so light a heart: in the great Atlantean travail of the "Thoughts" his feet sometimes "are almost gone." In his soul's agony, theological abstractions seem to become personal powers. It was as if just below the surface of the green undulations, the stately woods, of his own strange country of Auvergne, the volcanic fires had suddenly discovered themselves anew. In truth into his typical diagnosis, as it may seem, of the tragedy of the human soul, there have passed not merely the personal feelings, the temperament of an individual, but his malady also, a physical malady. Great genius, we know, has the power of elevating, transmuting, serving itself by the accidental conditions about it, however unpromising—poverty, and the like. It was certainly so with Pascal's long-continued physical sufferings. That *aigreur*, which is part of the native colour of Pascal's genius, is reinforced in the

"Pensées" by insupportable languor, alternating with supportable pain, as he died little by little through the eight years of their composition. They are essentially the utterance of a soul *malade*—a soul of great genius, whose malady became a new quality of that genius, perfecting it thus, by its very defect, as a type on the intellectual stage, and thereby guiding, reassuring sympathetically, manning by a sense of good company that large class of persons who are *malade* in the same way. "*La maladie est l'état naturel des Chrétiens*," says Pascal himself. And we concede that every one of us more or less is ailing thus, as another has told us that life itself is a disease of the spirit.

From Port-Royal also came, about the year 1670, a painful book, the "Life of Pascal," a portrait painted slowly from the life or living death, but with an almost exclusive preference for traits expressive of disease. The *post-mortem* examination of Pascal's brain revealed, we are now told, the secret, not merely of that long prostration, those sudden passing torments, but of something analogous to them in Pascal's genius and work. Well! the light cast indirectly on the literary work of Pascal by Mme. Périer's "Life" is of a similar kind. It is a veritable chapter in morbid pathology, though it may have truly a beauty for experts, the beauty which belongs to all refined cases even of cerebral disturbance. That he should

have sought relief from his singular wretchedness, in that sombre company, is like the second stroke of tragedy upon him. At moments Pascal becomes almost a sectarian, and seems to pass out of the genial broad heaven of the Catholic Church. He had lent himself in those last years to a kind of pieties which do not make a winning picture, which always have about them, even when they show themselves in men physically strong, something of the small compass of the sick-chamber. His medieval or oriental self-tortures, all the painful efforts at absolute detachment, a perverse asceticism taking all there still was to spare from the denuded and suffering body, might well, you may think, have died with him, but are here recorded, chiefly by way of showing the world, the Jesuits, that the Jansenists, too, had a saint quite after their mind.

But though, at first sight, you may find a pettiness in those minute pieties, they have their signification as a testimony to the wholeness of Pascal's assent, the entirety of his submission, his immense sincerity, the heroic grandeur of his achieved faith. The seventeenth century presents survivals of the gloomy mental habits of the Middle Age, but for the most part of a somewhat theatrical kind, imitations of Francis and Dominic or of their earlier imitators. In Pascal they are original, and have all their seriousness. *Que je n'en sois*

jamais séparé—pas séparé éternellement, he repeats, or makes that strange sort of MS. amulet, of which his sister tells us, repeat for him. *Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.* It is *table rase* he is trying to make of himself, that He might reign there absolutely alone, who, however, as he was bound to think, had made and blest all those things he declined to accept. Deeper and deeper, then, he retreated into the renuncient life. He could not, had he wished, deprive himself of that his greatest gift—literally a gift he might have thought it not to be buried but accounted for—the gift of *le beau dire*, of writing beautifully. "*Il avoit renoncé depuis longtemps aux sciences purement humains.*" To him who had known them so well, and as if by intuition, those abstract and perdurable forms of service might well have seemed a part of "the Lord's doing, marvellous in our eyes," as his favourite Psalm cxix., the psalm *des petites heures*, the cxviii. of the Vulgate, says.[1] These, too, he counts now as but a variety of *le néant* and vanity of things. He no longer records, therefore, the mathematical *aperçus* that may visit him; and in his scruples, his suspicions of visible beauty, he interests us as precisely an inversion of what is called the æsthetic life.

[1] The words here cited are, however, from Psalm cxviii., the cxvii. of the Vulgate, and not from Pascal's favourite Psalm. (C. L. S.)

Yet his faith, as in the days of the Middle Age, had been supported, rewarded, by what he believed to be visible miracle among the strange lights and shades of that retired place. Pascal's niece, the daughter of Madame Périer, a girl ten years of age, suffered from a disease of the eyes pronounced to be incurable. The disease was a peculiarly distressing one, the sort of affliction which, falling on a young child, may lead one to question the presence of divine justice in the world, makes one long that miracles were possible. Well! Pascal, for one, believed that on occasion that profound aspiration had been followed up by the power desired. A thorn from the crown of Jesus, as was believed, had been lately brought to the Port-Royal du Faubourg S. Jacques in Paris, and was one day applied devoutly to the eye of the suffering child. What followed was an immediate and complete cure, fully attested by experts. *Ah! Thou hast given him his heart's desire: and hast not denied him the request of his lips.* Pascal, and the young girl herself, faithfully to the end of a long life, believed the circumstances to have been miraculous. Otherwise, we do not see that Pascal was ever permitted to enjoy (so to speak) the religion for which he had exchanged so much; that the sense of acceptance, of assurance, had come to him; that for him the Spouse had ever penetrated the veil of the ordinary routine of the means of grace;

nothing that corresponded as a matter of clear personal intercourse of the very senses to the greatness of his surrender—who had emptied himself of all other things. Besides, there was some not wholly-explained delay in his reception, in those his last days, of the Sacrament. It was brought to him just in time—"*Voici celui que vous avez tant désiré*"—the ministrant says to the dying man. Pascal was then aged thirty-nine—an age you may remember fancifully noted as fatal to genius.

Pascal's "Thoughts," then, we shall not rightly measure but as the outcome, the utterance, of a soul diseased, a soul permanently ill at ease. We find in their constant tension something of insomnia, of that sleeplessness which can never be a quite healthful condition of mind in a human body. Sometimes they are cries, cries of obscure pain rather than thoughts—those great fine sayings which seem to betray by their depth of sound the vast unseen hollow places of nature, of humanity, just beneath one's feet or at one's side. Reading them, so modern still are those thoughts, so rich and various in suggestion, that one seems to witness the mental seed-sowing of the next two centuries, and perhaps more, as to those matters with which he concerns himself. Intuitions of a religious genius, they may well be taken also as the final considerations of the natural man, as a religious inquirer on doubt and faith, and their place in

things. Listen now to some of these "Thoughts" taken at random : taken at first for their brevity. *Peu de chose nous console, parce que peu de chose nous afflige. Par l'espace l'univers me comprend et m'engloutit comme un point : par la pensée je le comprends.* Things like these put us *en route* with Pascal. *Toutes les bonnes maximes sont dans le monde : on ne manque que de les appliquer.* The great ascetic was always hard on amusements, on mere pastimes : *Le divertissement nous amuse*, one and all of us, *et nous fait arriver insensiblement à la mort. Nous perdons encore la vie avec joie, pourvu qu'on en parle. On ne peut faire une bonne physionomie* (in a portrait) *qu'en accordant toutes nos contrariétés. L'homme n'est qu'un roseau, le plus foible de la nature, mais c'est un roseau pensant. Il ne faut pas que l'univers entier s'arme pour l'écraser. Une vapeur, une goutte d'eau, suffit pour le tuer. Mais quand l'univers l'écraseroit, l'homme seroit encore plus noble que se qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt, et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui, l'univers n'en sait rien.* It is not thought by which that excels, but the convincing force of imagination which sublimates its very triteness. *Toute notre dignité consiste donc en la pensée.*

There, then, you have at random the sort of stuff of which the "Pensées" are made. Let me now briefly indicate, also by quotation again, some of the main leading tendencies in them. *La chose la plus importante à toute la vie c'est la*

choix du métier : le hasard en dispose. There we recognise the manner of thought of Montaigne. Now one of the leading interests in the study of Pascal is to trace the influence upon him of the typical sceptic of the preceding century. Pascal's "Thoughts" we shall never understand unless we realise the under-texture in them of Montaigne's very phrases, the fascination the "Essays" had for Pascal in his capacity of one of the children of light, as giving a veritable *compte rendu* of the Satanic course of this world since the Fall, set forth with all the persuasiveness, the power and charm, all the gifts of Satan, the veritable light on things he has at his disposal.

Pascal re-echoes Montaigne then in asserting the paradoxical character of man and his experience. The old headings under which the Port-Royalist editors grouped the "Thoughts" recall the titles of Montaigne's "Essays"—"Of the Disproportion of Man," and the like. As strongly as Montaigne he delights in asserting the relative, local, ephemeral and merely provisional character of our ideas of law, vice, virtue, happiness, and so forth. *Comme la mode fait l'agrément aussi fait-elle la justice. La justice et la vérité sont deux pointes si subtiles, que nos instruments sont trop mousses pour y toucher exactement. Bien suivant la seule raison n'est juste de soi : tout branle avec le temps.* Sometimes he strikes the express accent of Montaigne : *Ceux qui sont dans un vaisseau croient que ceux qui sont*

au bord fuient. Le langage est pareil de tous côtés. Il faut avoir un point fixe pour en juger. Le port juge ceux qui sont dans un vaisseau, mais où prendrons-nous un port dans la morale? At times he seems to forget that he himself and Montaigne are after all not of the same flock, as his mind grazes in those pleasant places. *Qu'il* (man) *se regarde comme égaré dans ce canton détourné de la nature, et de ce petit cachot où il se trouve logé, qu'il apprenne* the earth, *et soi-même à son juste prix. Il faudrait avoir une règle. La raison s'offre, mais elle est ployable à tous sens; et ainsi il n'y en a point. Un même sens change selon les paroles qui l'expriment.* He has touches even of what he calls the malignity, the malign irony of Montaigne. *Rien que la médiocrité n'est bon,* he says,—*épris des hauteurs,* as he so conspicuously was—*C'est sortir de l'humanité que de sortir du milieu; la grandeur de l'âme humaine consiste à savoir s'y tenir. Rien ne fortifie plus le pyrrhonisme*—that is ever his word for scepticism—*que ce qu'il y en a qui ne sont pas pyrrhoniens: si tous étaient ils auraient tort.* You may even credit him, like Montaigne, with a somewhat Satanic intimacy with the ways, the cruel ways, the weakness, *lâcheté,* of the human heart, so that, as he says of Montaigne, himself too might be a pernicious study for those who have a native tendency to corruption.

The paradoxical condition of the world, the natural inconsistency of man, his strange

blending of meanness with ancient greatness, the caprices of his status here, of his power and attainments, in the issue of his existence—that is what the study of Montaigne had enforced on Pascal as the sincere *compte rendu* of experience. But then he passes at a tangent from the circle of the great sceptic's apprehension. That prospect of man and the *world*, undulant, capricious, inconsistent, contemptible, *lâche*, full of contradiction, with a soul of evil in things good, irreducible to law, upon which, after all, Montaigne looks out with a complacency so entire, fills Pascal with terror. It is the *world* on the morrow of a great catastrophe, the casual forces of which have by no means spent themselves. Yes! this *world* we see, of which we are a part, with its thousand dislocations, is precisely what we might expect as resultant from the Fall of Man, with consequences in full working still. It presents the appropriate aspect of a lost world, though with beams of redeeming grace about it, those, too, distributed somewhat capriciously to chosen people and elect souls, who, after all, can have but an ill time of it here. Under the tragic *éclairs* of divine wrath essentially implacable, the gentle, pleasantly undulating, sunny, earthly prospect of poor loveable humanity which opens out for one in Montaigne's "Essays," becomes for Pascal a scene of harsh precipices, of threatening heights and depths—the depths of his own nothingness. Vanity: nothingness: these

are his catchwords: *Nous sommes incapables et du vrai et du bien; nous sommes tous condamnés. Ce qui y paraît* (*i.e.*, what we see in the world) *ne marque ni une exclusion totale ni une présence manifeste de divinité, mais la présence d'un Dieu qui se cache:* (*Deus absconditus*, that is a recurrent favourite thought of his) *tout porte ce caractère.* In this world of abysmal dilemmas, he is ready to push all things to their extremes. All or nothing; for him real morality will be nothing short of sanctity. *En Jésus Christ toutes les contradictions sont accordées.* Yet what difficulties again in the religion of Christ! *Nulle autre religion n'a proposé de se haïr. La seule religion contraire à la nature, contraire au sens commun, est la seule qui ait toujours été.*

Multitudes in every generation have felt at least the æsthetic charm of the rites of the Catholic Church. For Pascal, on the other hand, a certain weariness, a certain puerility, a certain unprofitableness in them is but an extra trial of faith. He seems to have little sense of the beauty of holiness. And for his sombre, trenchant, precipitous philosophy there could be no middle terms; irresistible election, irresistible reprobation; only sometimes extremes meet, and again it may be the trial of faith that the justified seem as loveless and unlovely as the reprobate. *Abêtissez-vous!* A nature, you may think, that would magnify things to the utmost, nurse, expand them beyond their natural bounds by his

reflex action upon them. Thus revelation is to be received on evidence, indeed, but an evidence conclusive only on a presupposition or series of presuppositions, evidence that is supplemented by an act of imagination, or by the grace of faith, shall we say? At any rate, the fact is, that the genius of the great reasoner, of this great master of the abstract and deductive sciences, turned theologian, carrying the methods of thought there formed into the things of faith, was after all of the imaginative order. Now hear what he says of imagination: *Cette faculté trompeuse, qui semble nous être donnée exprès pour nous induire à une erreur nécessaire.* That has a sort of necessity in it. What he says has again the air of Montaigne, and he says much of the same kind: *Cette superbe puissance ennemie de la raison, combien toutes les richesses de la terre sont insuffisantes sans son consentement.* The imagination has the disposition of all things: *Elle fait la beauté, la justice, et le bonheur, qui est le tout du monde. L'imagination dispose de tout.* And what we have here to note is its extraordinary power in himself. Strong in him as the reasoning faculty, so to speak, it administered the reasoning faculty in him *à son gré;* but he was unaware of it, that power *d'autant plus fourbe qu'elle ne l'est pas toujours.* Hidden under the apparent rigidity of his favourite studies, imagination, even in them, played a large part. Physics, mathematics were with him largely matters of intuition, anticipation,

precocious discovery, short cuts, superb guessing. It was the inventive element in his work and his way of putting things that surprised those best able to judge. He might have discovered the mathematical sciences for himself, it is alleged, had his father, as he once had a mind to do, withheld him from instruction in them.

About the time when he was bidding adieu to the world, Pascal had an accident. As he drove round a corner on the Seine side to cross the bridge at Neuilly, the horses were precipitated down the bank into the water. Pascal escaped, but with a nervous shock, a certain hallucination, from which he never recovered. As he walked or sat he was apt to perceive a yawning depth beside him; would set stick or chair there to reassure himself. We are now told, indeed, that that circumstance has been greatly exaggerated. But how true to Pascal's temper, as revealed in his work, that alarmed precipitous character in it! Intellectually the abyss was evermore at his side. *Nous avons*, he observes, *un autre principe d'erreur, les maladies.* Now in him the imagination itself was like a physical malady, troubling, disturbing, or in active collusion with it. . . .

ART NOTES IN NORTH ITALY[1]

TITIAN, as we see him in what some have thought his noblest work, the large altar-piece, dated 1522, his forty-fifth year, of SS. Nazaro e Celso, at Brescia, is certainly a religious—a great, religious painter. The famous Gabriel of the Annunciation, aflight, in all the effortless energy of an angel indeed, and Sebastian, adapted, it was said, from an ancient statue, yet as novel in design as if Titian had been the first to handle that so familiar figure in old religious art—may represent for us a vast and varied amount of work —in which he expands to their utmost artistic compass the earlier religious dreams of Mantegna and the Bellini, affording sufficient proof how sacred themes could rouse his imagination, and all his manual skill, to heroic efforts. But he is also the painter of the *Venus of the Tribune* and the *Triumph of Bacchus;* and such frank acceptance of the voluptuous paganism of the Renaissance, the motive of a large proportion of his work,

[1] Published in the *New Review*, Nov. 1890, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

might make us think that religion, grandly dramatic as was his conception of it, can have been for him only one of many pictorial attitudes. There are however painters of that date who, while their work is great enough to be connected (perhaps groundlessly) with Titian's personal influence, or directly attributed to his hand, possess at least this psychological interest, that about their religiousness there can be no question. Their work is to be looked for mainly in and about the two sub-alpine towns of Brescia and Bergamo; in the former of which it becomes definable as a *school*—the school of Moretto, in whom the perfected art of the later Renaissance is to be seen in union with a catholicism as convinced, towards the middle of the sixteenth century, as that of Giotto or Angelico.

Moretto of Brescia, for instance, is one of the few painters who have fully understood the artistic opportunities of the subject of Saint Paul, for whom, for the most part, art has found only the conventional trappings of a Roman soldier (a soldier, as being in charge of those prisoners to Damascus), or a somewhat commonplace old age. Moretto also makes him a nobly accoutred soldier—the rim of the helmet, thrown backward in his fall to the earth, rings the head already with a faint circle of glory—but a soldier still in possession of all those resources of unspoiled youth which he is ready to offer in a

moment to the truth that has just dawned visibly upon him. The terrified horse, very grandly designed, leaps high against the suddenly darkened sky above the distant horizon of Damascus, with all Moretto's peculiar understanding of the power of black and white. But what signs the picture inalienably as Moretto's own is the thought of the saint himself, at the moment of his recovery from the stroke of Heaven. The pure, pale, beardless face, in noble profile, might have had for its immediate model some military monk of a later age, yet it breathes all the joy and confidence of the Apostle who knows in a single flash of time that he has found the veritable captain of his soul. It is indeed the Paul whose genius of conviction has so greatly moved the minds of men—the soldier who, bringing his prisoners "bound to Damascus," is become the soldier of Jesus Christ.

Moretto's picture has found its place (in a dark recess, alas !) in the Church of *Santa Maria presso San Celso*, in the suburbs of Milan, hard by the site of the old Roman cemetery, where Ambrose, at a moment when in one of his many conflicts a "sign" was needed, found the bodies of Nazarus and Celsus, youthful patrician martyrs in the reign of Nero, overflowing now with miraculous powers, their blood still fresh upon them—*conspersa recenti sanguine*. The body of Saint Nazarus he removed into the city : that of Saint Celsus remained within the little sanctuary

which still bears his name, and beside which, in the fifteenth century, arose the glorious Church of the Madonna, with spacious *atrium* after the Ambrosian manner, a façade richly sculptured in the style of the Renaissance, and sumptuously adorned within. Behind the massive silver tabernacle of the altar of the miraculous picture which gave its origin to this splendid building, the rare visitor, peeping as into some sacred bird-nest, detects one of the loveliest works of Luini, a small, but exquisitely finished "Holy Family." Among the fine pictures around are works by two other very notable religious painters of the *cinque-cento*. Both alike, Ferrari and Borgognone, may seem to have introduced into fiery Italian latitudes a certain northern temperature, and somewhat twilight, French, or Flemish, or German, thoughts. Ferrari, coming from the neighbourhood of Varallo, after work at Vercelli and Novara, returns thither to labour, as both sculptor and painter, in the "stations" of the *Sacro Monte*, at a form of religious art which would seem to have some natural kinship with the temper of a mountain people. It is as if the living actors in the "Passion Play" of Oberammergau had been transformed into almost illusive groups in painted *terra-cotta*. The scenes of the Last Supper, of the Martyrdom of the Innocents, of the Raising of Jairus' daughter, for instance, are certainly touching in the naïve piety of their life-sized realism. But Gaudenzio Ferrari had many

helpmates at the *Sacro Monte;* and his lovelier work is in the Franciscan Church at the foot of the hill, and in those two, truly Italian, far-off towns of the Lombard plain. Even in his great, many-storied fresco in the Franciscan Church at Varallo there are traces of a somewhat barbaric hankering after solid form; the armour of the Roman soldiers, for example, is raised and gilt. It is as if this serious soul, going back to his mountain home, had lapsed again into mountain "grotesque," with touches also, in truth, of a peculiarly northern poetry—a mystic poetry, which now and again, in his treatment, for instance, of angel forms and faces, reminds one of Blake. There is something of it certainly in the little white spectral soul of the penitent thief making its escape from the dishonoured body along the beam of his cross.

The contrast is a vigorous one when, in the space of a few hours, the traveller finds himself at Vercelli, half-stifled in its thick pressing crop of pumpkins and mulberry trees. The expression of the prophet occurs to him: "A lodge in a garden of cucumbers." Garden of cucumbers and half-tropical flowers, it has invaded the quiet open spaces of the town. Search through them, through the almost cloistral streets, for the Church of the Umiliati; and there, amid the soft garden-shadows of the choir, you may find the sentiment of the neighbourhood expressed with great refinement in what is perhaps

the masterpiece of Ferrari, "Our Lady of the Fruit-garden," as we might say—attended by twelve life-sized saints and the monkish donors of the picture. The remarkable proportions of the tall panel, up which the green-stuff is climbing thickly above the mitres and sacred garniture of those sacred personages, lend themselves harmoniously to the gigantic stature of Saint Christopher in the foreground as the patron saint of the church. With the savour of this picture in his memory, the visitor will look eagerly in some half-dozen neighbouring churches and deserted conventual places for certain other works from Ferrari's hand; and so, leaving the place under the influence of his delicate religious ideal, may seem to have been listening to much exquisite church-music there, violins and the like, on that perfectly silent afternoon—such music as he may still really hear on Sundays at the neighbouring town of Novara, famed for it from of old. Here, again, the art of Gaudenzio Ferrari reigns. Gaudenzio! It is the name of the saintly prelate on whom his pencil was many times employed, First Bishop of Novara, and patron of the magnificent basilica hard by which still covers his body, whose earthly presence in cope and mitre Ferrari has commemorated in the altar-piece of the "Marriage of St. Catherine," with its refined richness of colour, like a bank of real flowers blooming there, and like nothing else around it in the

vast *duomo* of old Roman architecture, now heavily masked in modern stucco. The solemn mountains, under the closer shadow of which his genius put on a northern hue, are far away, telling at Novara only as the grandly theatrical background to an entirely lowland life. And here, as at Vercelli so at Novara, Ferrari is not less graciously Italian than Luini himself.

If the name of Luini's master, Borgognone, is no proof of northern extraction, a northern temper is nevertheless a marked element of his genius—something of the *patience*, especially, of the masters of Dijon or Bruges, nowhere more clearly than in the two groups of male and female heads in the National Gallery, family groups, painted in the attitude of worship, with a lowly religious sincerity which may remind us of the contemporary work of M. Legros. Like those northern masters, he accepts piously, but can refine, what "has no comeliness." And yet perhaps no painter has so adequately presented that purely personal beauty (for which, indeed, even profane painters for the most part have seemed to care very little) as Borgognone in the two deacons, Stephen and Laurence, who, in one of the altar-pieces of the Certosa, assist at the throne of Syrus, ancient, sainted, First Bishop of Pavia—stately youths in quite imperial dalmatics of black and gold. An indefatigable worker at many forms of religious art, here and elsewhere, assisting at last in the

carving and inlaying of the rich marble façade of the Certosa, the rich carved and inlaid woodwork of Santa Maria at Bergamo, he is seen perhaps at his best, certainly in his most significantly religious mood, in the Church of the *Incoronata* at Lodi, especially in one picture there, the "Presentation of Christ in the Temple." The experienced visitor knows what to expect in the sacristies of the great Italian churches; the smaller, choicer works of Luini, say, of Della Robbia or Mino of Fiesole, the superb ambries and drawers and presses of old oak or cedar, the still untouched morsel of fresco—like sacred priestly thoughts visibly lingering there in the half-light. Well! the little octagonal Church of the *Incoronata* is like one of these sacristies. The work of Bramante—you see it, as it is so rarely one's luck to do, with its furniture and internal decoration complete and unchanged, the coloured pavement, the colouring which covers the walls, the elegant little organ of Domenico da Lucca (1507), the altar-screens with their dainty rows of brass cherubs. In Borgognone's picture of the "Presentation," there the place is, essentially as we see it to-day. The ceremony, invested with all the sentiment of a Christian sacrament, takes place in this very church, this "Temple" of the *Incoronata* where you are standing, reflected on the dimly glorious wall, as in a mirror. Borgognone in his picture has

but added in long legend, letter by letter, on the *fascia* below the cupola, the Song of Simeon.

The *Incoronata* however is, after all, the monument less of Ambrogio Borgognone than of the gifted Piazza family :—Callisto, himself born at Lodi, his father, his uncle, his brothers, his son Fulvio, working there in three generations, under marked religious influence, and with so much power and grace that, quite gratuitously, portions of their work have been attributed to the master-hand of Titian, in some imaginary visit here to these painters, who were in truth the disciples of another—Romanino of Brescia. At Lodi, the lustre of Scipione Piazza is lost in that of Callisto, his elder brother ; but he might worthily be included in a list of painters memorable for a single picture, such pictures as the solemn Madonna of Pierino del Vaga, in the *Duomo* of Pisa, or the Holy Family of Pellegrino Piola, in the Goldsmiths' Street at Genoa. A single picture, a single figure in a picture, signed and dated, over the altar of Saint Clement, in the Church of San Spirito, at Bergamo, might preserve the fame of Scipione Piazza, who did not live to be old. The figure is that of the youthful Clement of Rome himself, "who had seen the blessed Apostles," writing at the dictation of Saint Paul. For a moment he looks away from the letters of the book with all the wistful intelligence of a boy softly touched already by the radiancy of the

celestial Wisdom. "Her ways are ways of pleasantness!" That is the lesson this winsome, docile, spotless creature—*ingenui vultus puer ingenuique pudoris*—younger brother or cousin of Borgognone's noble deacons at the Certosa—seems put there to teach us. And in this church, indeed, as it happens, Scipione's work is side by side with work of his.

It is here, in fact, at Bergamo and at Brescia, that the late survival of a really convinced religious spirit becomes a striking fact in the history of Italian art. Vercelli and Novara, though famous for their mountain neighbourhood, enjoy but a distant and occasional view of Monte Rosa and its companions; and even then those awful stairways to tracts of airy sunlight may seem hardly real. But the beauty of the twin sub-alpine towns further eastward is shaped by the circumstance that mountain and plain meet almost in their streets, very effectively for all purposes of the picturesque. Brescia, immediately below the "Falcon of Lombardy" (so they called its masterful fortress on the last ledge of the Piè di Monte), to which you may now ascend by gentle turfed paths, to watch the purple mystery of evening mount gradually from the great plain up the mountain-walls close at hand, is as level as a church pavement, home-like, with a kind of easy walking from point to point about it, rare in Italian towns—a town full of walled gardens, giving even to

its smaller habitations the retirement of their more sumptuous neighbours, and a certain English air. You may peep into them, pacing its broad streets, from the blaze of which you are glad to escape into the dim and sometimes gloomy churches, the twilight sacristies, rich with carved and coloured woodwork. The art of Romanino still lights up one of the darkest of those churches with the altar-piece which is perhaps his most expressive and noblest work. The veritable blue sky itself seems to be breaking into the dark-cornered, low-vaulted, Gothic sanctuary of the Barefoot Brethren, around the Virgin and Child, the bowed, adoring figures of Bonaventura, Saint Francis, Saint Antony, the youthful majesty of Saint Louis, to keep for ever in memory—not the King of France however, in spite of the *fleurs-de-lys* on his cope of azure, but Louis, Bishop of Toulouse. A Rubens in Italy! you may think, if you care to rove from the delightful fact before you after vague supposititious alliances—something between Titian and Rubens! Certainly, Romanino's bold, contrasted colouring anticipates something of the northern freshness of Rubens. But while the peculiarity of the work of Rubens is a sense of momentary transition, as if the colours were even now melting in it, Romanino's canvas bears rather the steady glory of broad Italian noonday; while he is distinguished also for a remarkable *clearness* of

design, which has perhaps something to do, is certainly congruous with, a markedly religious sentiment, like that of Angelico or Perugino, lingering still in the soul of this Brescian painter towards the middle of the sixteenth century.

Romanino and Moretto, the two great masters of Brescia in successive generations, both alike inspired above all else by the majesty, the majestic beauty, of religion—its persons, its events, every circumstance that belongs to it—are to be seen in friendly rivalry, though with ten years' difference of age between them, in the Church of San Giovanni Evangelista ; Romanino approaching there, as near as he might, in a certain candle-lighted scene, to that harmony in black, white, and grey preferred by the younger painter. Before this or that example of Moretto's work, in that admirably composed picture of Saint Paul's Conversion, for instance, you might think of him as but a very noble designer in *grisaille.* A more detailed study would convince you that, whatever its component elements, there is a very complex tone which almost exclusively belongs to him ; the "Saint Ursula" finally, that he is a great, though very peculiar colourist—a lord of colour who, while he knows the colour resources that may lie even in black and white, has really included every delicate hue whatever in that faded "silver grey," which yet lingers in one's memory as their final effect. For some admirers indeed he is definable

as a kind of really sanctified Titian. It must be admitted, however, that whereas Titian sometimes lost a little of himself in the greatness of his designs, or committed their execution, in part, to others, Moretto, in his work, is always all *there*—thorough, steady, even, in his workmanship. That, again, was a result of his late-surviving religious conscience. And here, as in other instances, the supposed influence of the greater master is only a supposition. As a matter of fact, at least in his earlier life, Moretto made no visit to Venice; developed his genius at home, under such conditions for development as were afforded by the example of the earlier masters of Brescia itself; left his work there abundantly, and almost there alone, as the thoroughly representative product of a charming place. In the little Church of San Clemente he is still "at home" to his lovers; an intimately religious artist, full of cheerfulness, of joy. Upon the airy galleries of his great altar-piece, the angels dance against the sky above the Mother and the Child; Saint Clement, patron of the church, being attendant in pontifical white, with Dominic, Catherine, the Magdalen, and good, big-faced Saint Florian in complete armour, benign and strong. He knows many a saint not in the Roman breviary. Was there a single sweet-sounding name without its martyr patron? Lucia, Agnes, Agatha, Barbara, Cecilia —holy women, dignified, high-bred, intelligent—

have an altar of their own; and here, as in that festal high altar-piece, the spectator may note yet another artistic alliance, something of the pale effulgence of Correggio—an approach, at least, to that peculiar treatment of light and shade, and a pre-occupation with certain tricks therein of nature itself, by which Correggio touches Rembrandt on the one hand, Da Vinci on the other. Here, in Moretto's work, you may think that manner more delightful, perhaps because more refined, than in Correggio himself. Those pensive, tarnished, silver side-lights, like mere reflexions of natural sunshine, may be noticed indeed in many another painter of that day, in Lanini, for instance, at the National Gallery. In his "Nativity" at the Brera, Procaccini of Verona almost anticipates Correggio's *Heilige Nacht*. It is, in truth, the first step in the decomposition of light, a touch of decadence, of sunset, along the whole horizon of North-Italian art. It is, however, as the painter of the white-stoled Ursula and her companions that the great master of Brescia is most likely to remain in the memory of the visitor; with this fact, above all, clearly impressed on it, that Moretto had attained full intelligence of all the pictorial powers of *white*. In the clearness, the cleanliness, the hieratic distinction, of this earnest and deeply-felt composition, there is something "pre-Raphaelite"; as also in a certain liturgical formality in the grouping of the virgins—the

looks, "all one way," of the closely-ranged faces; while in the long folds of the drapery we may see something of the severe grace of early Tuscan sculpture—something of severity in the long, thin, emphatic shadows. For the light is high, as with the level lights of early morning, the air of which ruffles the banners borne by Ursula in her two hands, her virgin companions laying their hands also upon the tall staves, as if taking share, with a good will, in her self-dedication, with all the hazard of battle. They bring us, appropriately, close to the grave of this manly yet so virginal painter, born in the year 1500, dead at forty-seven.

Of Moretto and Romanino, whose works thus light up, or refine, the dark churches of Brescia and its neighbourhood, Romanino is scarcely to be seen beyond it. The National Gallery, however, is rich in Moretto's work, with two of his rare poetic portraits; and if the large altar-picture would hardly tell his secret to one who had not studied him at Brescia, in those who already know him it will awake many a reminiscence of his art at its best. The three white mitres, for instance, grandly painted towards the centre of the picture, at the feet of Saint Bernardino of Siena—the three bishoprics refused by that lowly saint—may remind one of the great white mitre which, in the genial picture of Saint Nicholas, in the *Miracoli* at Brescia, one of the children, who as delight-

fully unconventional acolytes accompany their beloved patron into the presence of the Madonna, carries along so willingly, laughing almost, with pleasure and pride, at his part in so great a function. In the altar-piece at the National Gallery those white mitres form the key-note from which the pale, cloistral splendours of the whole picture radiate. You see what a wealth of enjoyable colour Moretto, for one, can bring out of monkish habits in themselves sad enough, and receive a new lesson in the artistic value of reserve.

Rarer still (the single work of Romanino, it is said, to be seen out of Italy) is the elaborate composition in five parts on the opposite side of the doorway. Painted for the high-altar of one of the many churches of Brescia, it seems to have passed into secular hands about a century ago. Alessandro, patron of the church, one of the many youthful patrician converts Italy reveres from the ranks of the Roman army, stands there on one side, with ample crimson banner superbly furled about his lustrous black armour, and on the other—Saint Jerome, Romanino's own namesake—neither more nor less than the familiar, self-tormenting anchorite; for few painters (Bellini, to some degree, in his picture of the saint's study) have perceived the rare pictorial opportunities of Jerome; Jerome with the true cradle of the Lord, first of Christian antiquaries, author of the fragrant Vulgate version of the

Scriptures. Alessandro and Jerome support the Mother and the Child in the central place. But the loveliest subjects of this fine group of compositions are in the corners above, half-length, life-sized figures—Gaudioso, Bishop of Brescia, above Saint Jerome; above Alessandro, Saint Filippo Benizzi, meek founder of the Order of Servites to which that church at Brescia belonged, with his lily, and in the right hand a book; and what a book! It was another very different painter, Giuseppe Caletti, of Cremona, who, for the truth and beauty of his drawing of them, gained the title of the "Painter of Books." But if you wish to see what can be made of the leaves, the vellum cover, of a book, observe that in Saint Philip's hand.—The writer? the contents? you ask: What may they be? and whence did it come?—out of embalmed sacristy, or antique coffin of some early Brescian martyr, or, through that bright space of blue Italian sky, from the hands of an angel, like his Annunciation lily, or the book received in the Apocalypse by John the Divine? It is one of those old saints, Gaudioso (at home in every church in Brescia), who looks out with full face from the opposite corner of the altar-piece, from a background which, though it might be the new heaven over a new earth, is in truth only the proper, breathable air of Italy. As we see him here, Saint Gaudioso is one of the more exquisite treasures of our National Gallery. It was thus that at the magic

touch of Romanino's art the dim, early, hunted-down Brescian church of the primitive centuries, crushed into the dust, it might seem, was "brought to her king," out of those old dark crypts, "in raiment of needle-work"—the delicate, richly folded, pontifical white vestments, the mitre and staff and gloves, and rich jewelled cope, blue or green. The face, of remarkable beauty after a type which all feel though it is actually rare in art, is probably a portrait of some distinguished churchman of Romanino's own day; a second Gaudioso, perhaps, setting that later Brescian church to rights after the terrible French occupation in the painter's own time, as his saintly predecessor, the Gaudioso of the earlier century here commemorated, had done after the invasion of the Goths. The eloquent eyes are open upon some glorious vision. "He hath made us kings and priests!" they seem to say for him, as the clean, sensitive lips might do so eloquently. Beauty and Holiness had "kissed each other," as in Borgognone's imperial deacons at the Certosa. At the Renaissance the world might seem to have parted them again. But here certainly, once more, Catholicism and the Renaissance, religion and culture, holiness and beauty, might seem reconciled, by one who had conceived neither after any feeble way, in a gifted person. Here at least, by the skill of Romanino's hand, the obscure martyr of the crypts shines as a

saint of the later Renaissance, with a sanctity of which the elegant world itself would hardly escape the fascination, and which reminds one how the great Apostle Saint Paul has made courtesy part of the content of the Divine charity itself. A Rubens in Italy !—so Romanino has been called. In this gracious presence we might think that, like Rubens also, he had been a courtier.

NOTRE-DAME D'AMIENS[1]

THE greatest and purest of Gothic churches, Notre-Dame d'Amiens, illustrates, by its fine qualities, a characteristic secular movement of the beginning of the thirteenth century. Philosophic writers of French history have explained how, in that and in the two preceding centuries, a great number of the more important towns in eastern and northern France rose against the feudal establishment, and developed severally the local and municipal life of the commune. To guarantee their independence therein they obtained charters from their formal superiors. The Charter of Amiens served as the model for many other communes. Notre-Dame d'Amiens is the church of a commune. In that century of Saint Francis, of Saint Louis, they were still religious. But over against monastic interests, as identified with a central authority—king, emperor, or pope—they pushed forward the local, and, so to call it, secular authority of their

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bishops, the flower of the "secular clergy" in all its mundane astuteness, ready enough to make their way as the natural protectors of such townships. The people of Amiens, for instance, under a powerful episcopal patron, invested their civic pride in a vast cathedral, outrivalling neighbours, as being in effect their parochial church, and promoted there the new, revolutionary, Gothic manner, at the expense of the derivative and traditional, Roman or Romanesque, style, the imperial style, of the great monastic churches. Nay, those grand and beautiful *people's* churches of the thirteenth century, churches pre-eminently of "Our Lady," concurred also with certain novel humanistic movements of religion itself at that period, above all with the expansion of what is reassuring and popular in the worship of Mary, as a tender and accessible, though almost irresistible, intercessor with her severe and awful Son.

Hence the splendour, the space, the novelty, of the great French cathedrals in the first Pointed style, monuments for the most part of the artistic genius of laymen, significant pre-eminently of that Queen of Gothic churches at Amiens. In most cases those early Pointed churches are entangled, here or there, by the constructions of the old round-arched style, the heavy, Norman or other, Romanesque chapel or aisle, side by side, though in strong contrast with, the soaring new Gothic of nave or transept. But of that older

manner of the round arch, the *plein-cintre*, Amiens has nowhere, or almost nowhere, a trace. The Pointed style, fully pronounced, but in all the purity of its first period, found here its completest expression. And while those venerable, Romanesque, profoundly characteristic, monastic churches, the gregarious product of long centuries, are for the most part anonymous, as if to illustrate from the first a certain personal tendency which came in with the Gothic manner, we know the name of the architect under whom, in the year A.D. 1220, the building of the church of Amiens began—a layman, Robert de Luzarches.

Light and space—floods of light, space for a vast congregation, for all the people of Amiens, for their movements, with something like the height and width of heaven itself enclosed above them to breathe in;—you see at a glance that this is what the ingenuity of the Pointed method of building has here secured. For breadth, for the easy flow of a processional torrent, there is nothing like the "ambulatory," the aisle of the choir and transepts. And the entire area is on one level. There are here no flights of steps upward, as at Canterbury, no descending to dark crypts, as in so many Italian churches—a few low, broad steps to gain the choir, two or three to the high altar. To a large extent the old pavement remains, though almost worn-out by the footsteps of centuries. Priceless, though not composed of precious material, it gains its effect

by ingenuity and variety in the patterning, zig-zags, chequers, mazes, prevailing respectively, in white and grey, in great square, alternate spaces—the original floor of a medieval church for once untouched. The massive square bases of the pillars of a Romanesque church, harshly angular, obstruct, sometimes cruelly, the standing, the movements, of a multitude of persons. To carry such a multitude conveniently round them is the matter-of-fact motive of the gradual chiselling away, the softening of the angles, the graceful compassing, of the Gothic base, till in our own Perpendicular period it all but disappears. You may study that tendency appropriately in the one church of Amiens; for such in effect Notre-Dame has always been. That circumstance is illustrated by the great font, the oldest thing here, an oblong trough, perhaps an ancient saintly coffin, with four quaint prophetic figures at the angles, carved from a single block of stone. To it, as to the baptistery of an Italian town, not so long since all the babes of Amiens used to come for christening.

Strange as it may seem, in this "queen" of Gothic churches, *l'église ogivale par excellence*, there is nothing of mystery in the vision, which yet surprises, over and over again, the eye of the visitor who enters at the western doorway. From the flagstone at one's foot to the distant keystone of the *chevet*, noblest of its species—

reminding you of how many largely graceful things, sails of a ship in the wind, and the like!—at one view the whole is visible, intelligible;—the integrity of the first design; how later additions affixed themselves thereto; how the rich ornament gathered upon it; the increasing richness of the choir; its glazed triforium; the realms of light which expand in the chapels beyond; the astonishing boldness of the vault, the astonishing lightness of what keeps it above one; the unity, yet the variety of perspective. There is no mystery here, and indeed no repose. Like the age which projected it, like the impulsive communal movement which was here its motive, the Pointed style at Amiens is full of excitement. Go, for repose, to classic work, with the simple vertical law of pressure downwards, or to its Lombard, Rhenish, or Norman derivatives. Here, rather, you are conscious restlessly of that sustained equilibrium of oblique pressure on all sides, which is the essence of the hazardous Gothic construction, a construction of which the "flying buttress" is the most significant feature. Across the clear glass of the great windows of the triforium you see it, feel it, at its Atlas-work audaciously. "A pleasant thing it is to behold the sun" those first Gothic builders would seem to have said to themselves; and at Amiens, for instance, the walls have disappeared; the entire building is composed of its windows. Those who built it

might have had for their one and only purpose to enclose as large a space as possible with the given material.

No; the peculiar Gothic buttress, with its double, triple, fourfold flights, while it makes such marvels possible, securing light and space and graceful effect, relieving the pillars within of their massiveness, is not a restful architectural feature. Consolidation of matter naturally on the move, security for settlement in a very complex system of construction—that is avowedly a part of the Gothic situation, the Gothic problem. With the genius which contended, though not always quite successfully, with this difficult problem, came also novel æsthetic effect, a whole volume of delightful æsthetic effects. For the mere *melody* of Greek architecture, for the sense as it were of music in the opposition of successive sounds, you got *harmony*, the richer music generated by opposition of sounds in one and the same moment; and were gainers. And then, in contrast with the classic manner, and the Romanesque survivals from it, the vast complexity of the Gothic style seemed, as if consciously, to correspond to the richness, the expressiveness, the thousandfold influence of the Catholic religion, in the thirteenth century still in natural movement in every direction. The later Gothic of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries tended to conceal, as it now took for granted, the structural use of the buttress, for

example; seemed to turn it into a mere occasion for ornament, not always pleasantly:—while the ornament was out of place, the structure failed. Such falsity is far enough away from what at Amiens is really of the thirteenth century. In this pre-eminently "secular" church, the execution, in all the defiance of its method, is direct, frank, clearly apparent, with the result not only of reassuring the intelligence, but of keeping one's curiosity also continually on the alert, as we linger in these restless aisles.

The integrity of the edifice, together with its volume of light, has indeed been diminished by the addition of a range of chapels, beyond the proper limits of the aisles, north and south. Not a part of the original design, these chapels were formed for private uses in the fourteenth century, by the device of walling in and vaulting the open spaces between the great buttresses of the nave. Under the broad but subdued sunshine which falls through range upon range of windows, reflected from white wall and roof and gallery, soothing to the eye, while it allows you to see the delicate carved work in all its refinement of touch, it is only as an afterthought, an artificial after-thought, that you regret the lost stained glass, or the vanished mural colour, if such to any large extent there ever were. The best stained glass is often that stained by weather, by centuries of weather,

and we may well be grateful for the amazing cheerfulness of the interior of Amiens, as we actually find it. Windows of the richest remain, indeed, in the apsidal chapels; and the rose-windows of the transepts are known, from the prevailing tones of their stained glass, as Fire and Water, the western rose symbolising in like manner Earth and Air, as respectively green and blue. But there is no reason to suppose that the interior was ever so darkened as to prevent one's seeing, really and clearly, the dainty ornament, which from the first abounded here; the floriated architectural detail; the broad band of flowers and foliage, thick and deep and purely sculptured, above the arches of nave and choir and transepts, and wreathing itself continuously round the embedded piers which support the roof; with the woodwork, the illuminated metal, the magnificent tombs, the jewellers' work in the chapels. One precious, early thirteenth-century window of *grisaille* remains, exquisite in itself, interesting as evidence of the sort of decoration which originally filled the larger number of the windows. *Grisaille*, with its lace-work of transparent grey, set here and there with a ruby, a sapphire, a gemmed medallion, interrupts the clear light on things hardly more than the plain glass, of which indeed such windows are mainly composed. The finely designed frames of iron for the support of the glass, in the windows from which even

this decoration is gone, still remain, to the delight of those who are knowing in the matter.

Very ancient light, this seems, at any rate, as if it had been lying imprisoned thus for long centuries; were in fact the light over which the great vault originally closed, now become almost substance of thought, one might fancy,—a mental object or medium. We are reminded that after all we must of necessity look on the great churches of the Middle Age with other eyes than those who built or first worshipped in them; that there is something verily worth having, and a just equivalent for something else lost, in the mere effect of time, and that the salt of all æsthetic study is in the question,—What, precisely what, is this to *me?* You and I, perhaps, should not care much for the mural colouring of a medieval church, could we see it as it was; might think it crude, and in the way. What little remains of it at Amiens has parted, indeed, in the course of ages, with its shrillness and its coarse grain. And in this matter certainly, in view of Gothic polychrome, our difference from the people of the thirteenth century is radical. We have, as it was very unlikely they should have, a curiosity, a very pleasurable curiosity, in the mere working of the stone they built with, and in the minute facts of their construction, which their colouring, and the layer of plaster it involved, disguised or hid. We may think that in architecture stone is the most beautiful

of all things. Modern hands have replaced the colour on some of the tombs here—the effigies, the tabernacles above—skilfully as may be, and have but deprived them of their dignity. Medieval colouring, in fact, must have improved steadily, as it decayed, almost till there came to be no question of colour at all. In architecture, close as it is to men's lives and their history, the visible result of time is a large factor in the realised æsthetic value, and what a true architect will in due measure always trust to. A false restoration only frustrates the proper ripening of his work.

If we may credit our modern eyes, then, those old, very secular builders aimed at, they achieved, an immense cheerfulness in their great church, with a purpose which still pursued them into their minuter decoration. The conventional vegetation of the Romanesque, its blendings of human or animal with vegetable form, in cornice or capital, have given way here, in the first Pointed style, to a pleasanter, because more natural, mode of fancy; to veritable forms of vegetable life, flower or leaf, from meadow and woodside, though still indeed with a certain survival of the grotesque in a confusion of the leaf with the flower, which the subsequent Decorated period will wholly purge away in its perfect garden-borders. It was not with monastic artists and artisans that the sheds and workshops around Amiens Cathedral were filled,

as it rose from its foundations through fifty years; and those lay schools of art, with their communistic sentiment, to which in the thirteenth century the great episcopal builders must needs resort, would in the natural course of things tend towards naturalism. The subordinate arts also were no longer at the monastic stage, borrowing inspiration exclusively from the experiences of the cloister, but belonged to guilds of laymen—smiths, painters, sculptors. The great confederation of the "city," the commune, subdivided itself into confederations of citizens. In the natural objects of the first Pointed style there is the freshness as of nature itself, seen and felt for the first time; as if, in contrast, those older cloistral workmen had but fed their imagination in an embarrassed, imprisoned, and really decadent manner, or mere reminiscence of, or prescriptions about, things visible.

Congruous again with the popularity of the builders of Amiens, of their motives, is the wealth, the freedom and abundance, of popular, almost secular, teaching, here afforded, in the carving especially, within and without; an open Bible, in place of later legend, as at monastic Vézelay,—the Bible treated as a book about men and women, and other persons equally real, but blent with lessons, with the liveliest observations, on the lives of men as they were then and now, what they do, and how they do it, or did it then, and on the doings of nature

which so greatly influence what man does; together with certain impressive metaphysical and moral ideas, a sort of popular scholastic philosophy, or as if it were the virtues and vices Aristotle defines, or the characters of Theophrastus, translated into stone. Above all, it is to be observed that as a result of this spirit, this "free" spirit, in it, art has at last become personal. The artist, as such, appears at Amiens, as elsewhere, in the thirteenth century; and, by making his personal way of conception and execution prevail there, renders his own work vivid and organic, and apt to catch the interest of other people. He is no longer a Byzantine, but a Greek—an unconscious Greek. Proof of this is in the famous *Beau-Dieu* of Amiens, as they call that benign, almost classically proportioned figure, on the central pillar of the great west doorway; though in fact neither that, nor anything else on the west front of Amiens, is quite the best work here. For that we must look rather to the sculpture of the portal of the south transept, called, from a certain image there, *Portail de la Vierge dorée*, gilded at the expense of some unknown devout person at the beginning of the last century. A presentation of the mystic, the delicately miraculous, story of Saint Honoré, eighth Bishop of Amiens, and his companions, with its voices, its intuitions, and celestial intimations, it has evoked a correspondent method of work at once

naïve and nicely expressive. The *rose*, or *roue*, above it, carries on the outer rim seventeen personages, ascending and descending—another piece of popular philosophy—the wheel of fortune, or of human life.

And they were great brass-founders, surely, who at that early day modelled and cast the tombs of the Bishops Evrard and Geoffrey, vast plates of massive black bronze in half-relief, like abstract thoughts of those grand old prelatic persons. The tomb of Evrard, who laid the foundations (*qui fundamenta hujus basilicæ locavit*), is not quite as it was. Formerly it was sunk in the pavement, while the tomb of Bishop Geoffrey opposite (it was he closed in the mighty vault of the nave: *hanc basilicam culmen usque perduxit*), itself vaulted-over the space of the grave beneath. The supreme excellence of those original workmen, the journeymen of Robert de Luzarches and his successor, would seem indeed to have inspired others, who have been at their best here, down to the days of Louis the Fourteenth. It prompted, we may think, a high level of execution, through many revolutions of taste in such matters; in the marvellous furniture of the choir, for instance, like a whole wood, say a thicket of old hawthorn, with its curved topmost branches spared, slowly transformed by the labour of a whole family of artists, during fourteen years, into the stalls, in number one hundred and ten, with nearly four

thousand figures. Yet they are but on a level with the Flamboyant carved and coloured enclosures of the choir, with the histories of John the Baptist, whose face-bones are here preserved, and of Saint Firmin—popular saint, who protects the houses of Amiens from fire. Even the screens of forged iron around the sanctuary, work of the seventeenth century, appear actually to soar, in their way, in concert with the airy Gothic structure; to let the daylight pass as it will; to have come, they too, from smiths, odd as it may seem at just that time, with some touch of inspiration in them. In the beginning of the fifteenth century they had reared against a certain bald space of wall, between the great portal and the western "rose," an organ, a lofty, many-chambered, veritable house of church-music, rich in azure and gold, finished above at a later day, not incongruously, in the quaint, pretty manner of Henri-Deux. And those who are interested in the curiosities of ritual, of the old provincial Gallican "uses," will be surprised to find one where they might least have expected it. The reserved Eucharist still *hangs* suspended in a pyx, formed like a dove, in the midst of that lamentable "glory" of the eighteenth century in the central bay of the sanctuary, all the poor, gaudy, gilt rays converging towards it. There are days in the year in which the great church is still literally filled with reverent worshippers, and if you come late to service you push the

doors in vain against the closely serried shoulders of the good people of Amiens, one and all in black for church-holiday attire. Then, one and all, they intone the *Tantum ergo* (did it ever sound so in the Middle Ages?) as the Eucharist, after a long procession, rises once more into its resting-place.

If the Greeks, as at least one of them says, really believed there could be no true beauty without bigness, that thought certainly is most specious in regard to architecture; and the thirteenth-century church of Amiens is one of the three or four largest buildings in the world, out of all proportion to any Greek building, both in that and in the multitude of its external sculpture. The chapels of the nave are embellished without by a double range of single figures, or groups, commemorative of the persons, the mysteries, to which they are respectively dedicated—the gigantic form of Christopher, the Mystery of the Annunciation.

The builders of the church seem to have projected no very noticeable towers; though it is conventional to regret their absence, especially with visitors from England, where indeed cathedral and other towers are apt to be good, and really make their mark. Robert de Luzarches and his successors aimed rather at the domical outline, with its central point at the centre of the church, in the spire or *flèche*. The existing spire is a wonderful mass of carpentry

of the beginning of the sixteenth century, at which time the lead that carefully wraps every part of it was heavily gilt. The great western towers are lost in the west front, the grandest, perhaps the earliest, example of its species—three profound, sculptured portals; a double gallery above, the upper gallery carrying colossal images of twenty-two kings of the House of Judah, ancestors of Our Lady; then the great rose; above it the ringers' gallery, half masking the gable of the nave, and uniting at their topmost storeys the twin, but not exactly equal or similar, towers, oddly oblong in plan, as if never intended to carry pyramids or spires. They overlook an immense distance in those flat, peat-digging, black and green regions, with rather cheerless rivers, and are the centre of an architectural region wider still—of a group to which Soissons, far beyond the woods of Compiègne, belongs, with St. Quentin, and, towards the west, a too ambitious rival, Beauvais, which has stood however—what we now see of it—for six centuries.

It is a spare, rather sad world at most times that Notre-Dame d'Amiens thus broods over; a country with little else to be proud of; the sort of world, in fact, which makes the range of conceptions embodied in these cliffs of quarried and carved stone all the more welcome as a hopeful complement to the meagreness of most people's present existence, and its apparent ending in a

sparely built coffin under the flinty soil, and grey, driving sea-winds. In Notre-Dame, therefore, and her sisters, there is not only a common method of construction, a single definable type, different from that of other French latitudes, but a correspondent common sentiment also; something which speaks, amid an immense achievement just here of what is beautiful and great, of the necessity of an immense effort in the natural course of things, of what you may see quaintly designed in one of those hieroglyphic carvings—*radix de terra sitienti:* "a root out of a dry ground."

VÉZELAY[1]

As you discern the long unbroken line of its roof, low-pitched for France, above the cottages and willow-shaded streams of the place, you might think the abbey church of Pontigny, the largest Cistercian church now remaining, only a great farm-building. On a nearer view there is something unpretending, something pleasantly English, in the plain grey walls, pierced with long "lancet" windows, as if they overlooked the lowlands of Essex, or the meadows of Kent or Berkshire, the sort of country from which came those saintly exiles of our race who made the cloisters of Pontigny famous, and one of whom, Saint Edmund of Abingdon, *Saint-Edme*, still lies enshrined here. The country which the sons of Saint Bernard choose for their abode is in fact but a patch of scanty pasture-land in the midst of a heady wine-district. Like its majestic Cluniac rivals, the church has its western portico, elegant in structure but of comparatively humble

[1] Published in the *Nineteenth Century*, June 1894, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

proportions, under a plain roof of tiles, pent-wise. Within, a heavy coat of white-wash seems befitting to the simple forms of the "Transition," or quite earliest "Pointed," style, to its remarkable continence of spirit, its uniformity, and cleanness of build. The long prospect of nave and choir ends, however, with a sort of graceful smallness, in a *chevet* of seven closely packed, narrow bays. It is like a nun's church, or like a nun's coif.

The church of Pontigny, representative generally of the churches of the Cistercian order, including some of the loveliest early English ones, was in truth significant of a reaction, a reaction against monasticism itself, as it had come to be in the order of Cluny, the genius of which found its proper expression in the imperious, but half-barbaric, splendours of the richest form of the *Romanesque*, the monastic style pre-eminently, as we may still see it at La Charité-sur-Loire, at Saint-Benoît, above all, on the hill of Vézelay. Saint Bernard, who had lent his immense influence to the order of Cîteaux by way of a monastic reform, though he had a genius for hymns and was in other ways an eminent religious poet, and though he gave new life to the expiring romance of the crusades, was, as regards the visible world, much of a Puritan. Was it he who, wrapt in thought upon the world unseen, walked along the shores of Lake Leman without observing it? —the eternal snows he might have taken for the walls of the New Jerusalem; the blue waves he

might have fancied its pavement of sapphire. In the churches, the worship, of his new order he required simplicity, and even severity, being fortunate in finding so winsome an exponent of that principle as the early Gothic of Pontigny, or of the first Cistercian church, now destroyed, at Cîteaux itself. Strangely enough, while Bernard's own temper of mind was a survival from the past (we see this in his contest with Abelard), hierarchic, reactionary, suspicious of novelty, the architectural style of his preference was largely of secular origin. It had a large share in that inventive and innovating genius, that expansion of the natural human soul, to which the art, the literature, the religious movements of the thirteenth century in France, as in Italy, where it ends with Dante, bear witness.

In particular, Bernard had protested against the sculpture, rich and fantastic, but gloomy, it might be indecent, developed more abundantly than anywhere else in the churches of Burgundy, and especially in those of the Cluniac order. "What is the use," he asks, "of those grotesque monsters in painting and sculpture?" and almost certainly he had in mind the marvellous carved work at Vézelay, whither doubtless he came often—for example on Good Friday, 1146, to preach, as we know, the second crusade in the presence of Louis the Seventh. He too might have wept at the sight of the doomed multitude (one in ten, it is said, returned from the Holy

Land), as its enthusiasm, under the charm of his fiery eloquence, rose to the height of his purpose. Even the aisles of Vézelay were not sufficient for the multitude of his hearers, and he preached to them in the open air, from a rock still pointed out on the hillside. Armies indeed have been encamped many times on the slopes and meadows of the valley of the Cure, now to all seeming so impregnably tranquil. The Cluniac order even then had already declined from its first intention; and that decline became especially visible in the Abbey of Vézelay itself not long after Bernard's day. Its majestic immoveable church was complete by the middle of the twelfth century. And there it still stands in spite of many a threat, while the conventual buildings around it have disappeared; and the institution it represented—secularised at its own request at the Reformation—had dwindled almost to nothing at all, till in the last century the last Abbot built himself, in place of the old Gothic lodging below those solemn walls, a sort of *Château Gaillard*, a dainty abode in the manner of Louis Quinze—swept away that too at the Revolution—where the great oaks now flourish, with the rooks and squirrels.

Yet the order of Cluny, in its time, in that dark period of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, had deserved well of those to whom religion, and art, and social order are precious. The Cluniacs had in fact represented monasticism in the most

legitimate form of its activity; and, if the church of Vézelay was not quite the grandest of their churches, it is certainly the grandest of them which remains. It is also typical in character. As Notre-Dame d'Amiens is pre-eminently the church of the city, of a commune, so the Madeleine of Vézelay is typically the church of a monastery.

The monastic style proper, then, in its peculiar power and influence, was Romanesque, and with the Cluniac order; and here perhaps better than anywhere else we may understand what it really came to, what was its effect on the spirits, the imagination.

As at Pontigny, the Cistercians, for the most part, built their churches in lowly valleys, according to the intention of their founder. The representative church of the Cluniacs, on the other hand, lies amid the closely piled houses of the little town, which it protected and could punish, on a steep hill-top, like a long massive chest there, heavy above you, as you climb slowly the winding road, the old unchanged pathway of Saint Bernard. In days gone by it threatened the surrounding neighbourhood with four boldly built towers; had then also a spire at the crossing; and must have been at that time like a more magnificent version of the buildings which still crown the hill of Laon. Externally, the proportions, the squareness, of the nave (west and east, the vast *narthex* or porch, and the

Gothic choir, rise above its roof-line), remind one of another great Romanesque church at home—of the nave of Winchester, out of which Wykeham carved his richly panelled Perpendicular interior.

At Vézelay however, the Romanesque, the Romanesque of Burgundy, alike in the first conception of the whole structure, and in the actual locking together of its big stones, its masses of almost unbroken masonry, its *inertia*, figures as of more imperial character, and nearer to the Romans of old, than its feebler kindred in England or Normandy. We seem to have before us here a Romanesque architecture, studied, not from Roman basilicas or Roman temples, but from the arenas, the colossal gateways, the triumphal arches, of the people of empire, such as remain even now, not in the South of France only. The simple "flying," or rather leaning and almost couchant, buttresses, quadrants of a circle, might be parts of a Roman aqueduct. In contrast to the lightsome Gothic manner of the last quarter of the twelfth century (as we shall presently find it here too, like an escape for the eye, for the temper, out of some grim underworld into genial daylight), the Cluniac church might seem a still active instrument of the iron tyranny of Rome, of its tyranny over the animal spirits. As the ghost of ancient Rome still lingers "over the grave thereof," in the papacy, the hierarchy, so is it with the material structures

also, the Cluniac and other Romanesque churches, which most emphatically express the hierarchical, the papal system. There is something about this church of Vézelay, in the long-sustained patience of which it tells, that brings to mind the labour of slaves, whose occasional Fescennine licence and fresh memories of a barbaric life also find expression, now and again, in the strange sculpture of the place. Yet here for once, around a great French church, there is the kindly repose of English "precincts," and the country which this monastic acropolis overlooks southwards is a very pleasant one, as we emerge from the shadows of—yes! of that peculiarly *sad* place—a country all the pleasanter by reason of the toil upon it, performed, or exacted from others, by the monks, through long centuries; *Le Morvan*, with its distant blue hills and broken foreground, the vineyards, the patches of woodland, the roads winding into their cool shadows; though in truth the fortress-like outline of the monastic church and the sombre hue of its material lend themselves most readily to the effects of a stormy sky.

By a door, which in the great days opened from a magnificent cloister, you enter what might seem itself but the ambulatory of a cloister, superbly vaulted and long and regular, and built of huge stones of a metallic colour. It is the southern aisle of the nave, a nave of ten bays, the grandest Romanesque interior in France,

perhaps in the world. In its mortified light the very soul of monasticism, Roman and half-military, as the completest outcome of a religion of threats, seems to descend upon one. Monasticism is indeed the product of many various tendencies of the religious soul, one or another of which may very properly connect itself with the Pointed style, as we saw in those lightsome aisles of Pontigny, so expressive of the purity, the lowly sweetness, of the soul of Bernard. But it is here at Vézelay, in this iron place, that monasticism in its central, its historically most significant purpose, presents itself as most completely at home. There is no triforium. The monotonous cloistral length of wall above the long-drawn series of stately round arches, is unbroken save by a plain small window in each bay, placed as high as possible just below the cornice, as a mere after-thought, you might fancy. Those windows were probably unglazed, and closed only with wooden shutters as occasion required. Furnished with the stained glass of the period, they would have left the place almost in darkness, giving doubtless full effect to the monkish candle-light in any case needful here. An almost perfect cradle-roof, tunnel-like from end to end of the long central aisle, adds by its simplicity of form to the magnificent unity of effect. The bearing-arches, which span it from bay to bay, being parti-coloured, with *voussures* of alternate white and a kind of grey or green,

being also somewhat flat at the keystone, and literally eccentric, have, at least for English eyes, something of a Saracenic or other Oriental character. Again, it is as if the architects—the engineers—who worked here, had seen things undreamt of by other Romanesque builders, the builders in England and Normandy.

Here then, scarcely relieving the almost savage character of the work, abundant on tympanum and doorway without, above all on the immense capitals of the nave within, is the sculpture which offended Bernard. A sumptuous band of it, a carved *guipure* of singular boldness, passes continuously round the arches, and along the cornices from bay to bay, and with the large bossy tendency of the ornament throughout may be regarded as typical of Burgundian richness. Of sculptured capitals, to like, or to dislike with Saint Bernard, there are nearly a hundred, unwearied in variety, unique in the energy of their conception, full of wild promise in their coarse execution, cruel, you might say, in the realisation of human form and features. Irresistibly they rivet attention.

The subjects are for the most part Scriptural, chosen apparently as being apt for strongly satiric treatment, the suicide of Judas, the fall of Goliath. The legend of Saint Benedict, naturally at home in a Benedictine church, presented the sculptor with a series of forcible grotesques ready-made. Some monkish story,

half moral, half facetious, perhaps a little coarse, like that of Sainte Eugénie, from time to time makes variety; or an example of the punishment of the wicked by men or by devils, who play a large, and to themselves thoroughly enjoyable and merry, part here. The sculptor would seem to have witnessed the punishment of the blasphemer; how adroitly the executioner planted knee on the culprit's bosom, as he lay on the ground, and out came the sinful tongue, to meet the iron pincers. The minds of those who worked thus seem to have been almost insanely preoccupied just then with the human countenance, but by no means exclusively in its pleasantness or dignity. Bold, crude, original, their work indicates delight in the power of reproducing fact, curiosity in it, but little or no sense of beauty. The humanity therefore here presented, as in the Cluniac sculpture generally, is wholly unconventional. M. Viollet-le-Duc thinks he can trace in it individual types still actually existing in the peasantry of Le Morvan. Man and morality, however, disappearing at intervals, the acanthine capitals have a kind of later Venetian beauty about them, as the Venetian birds also, the conventional peacocks, or birds wholly of fantasy, amid the long fantastic foliage. There are still however no true flowers of the field here. There is pity, it must be confessed, on the other hand, and the delicacy, the beauty, which that always brings

with it, where Jephtha peeps at the dead daughter's face, lifting timidly the great leaves that cover it; in the hanging body of Absalom; in the child carried away by the eagle, his long frock twisted in the wind as he goes. The parents run out in dismay, and the devil grins, not because it is the punishment of the child or of them; but because he is the author of all mischief everywhere, as the monkish carver conceived—so far wholesomely.

We must remember that any sculpture less emphatic would have been ineffective, because practically invisible, in this sombre place. But at the west end there is an escape for the eye, for the soul, towards the unhindered, natural, afternoon sun; not however into the outer and open air, but through an arcade of three bold round arches, high above the great closed western doors, into a somewhat broader and loftier place than this, a reservoir of light, a veritable *camera lucida*. The light is that which lies below the vault and within the tribunes of the famous *narthex* (as they say), the vast fore-church or vestibule, into which the nave is prolonged. A remarkable feature of many Cluniac churches, the great western porch, on a scale which is approached in England only at Peterborough, is found also in some of the churches of the Cistercians. It is characteristic, in fact, rather of Burgundy than of either of those religious orders especially.

At Pontigny itself, for instance, there is a good one; and a very early one at Paray-le-Monial. Saint-Père-sous-Vézelay, daughter of the great church, in the vale below, has a late Gothic example; Semur also, with fantastic lodges above it. The cathedral of Autun, a secular church in rivalry of the "religious," presents, by way of such western porch or vestibule, two entire bays of the nave, unglazed, with the vast western arch open to the air; the west front, with its rich portals, being thrown back into the depths of the great fore-church thus produced.

The *narthex* of Vézelay, the largest of these singular structures, is glazed, and closed towards the west by what is now the *façade*. It is itself in fact a great church, a nave of three magnificent bays, and of three aisles, with a spacious triforium. With their fantastic sculpture, sheltered thus from accident and weather, in all its original freshness, the great portals of the primitive *façade* serve now for doorways, as a second, solemn, door of entrance, to the church proper within. The very structure of the place, and its relation to the main edifice, indicate that it was for use on occasion, when, at certain great feasts, that of the Magdalen especially, to whom the church of Vézelay is dedicated, the monastery was swollen with pilgrims, too poor, too numerous, to be lodged in the town, come hither to worship before the

relics of the friend of Jesus, enshrined in a low-vaulted crypt, the floor of which is the natural rocky surface of the hill-top. It may be that the pilgrims were permitted to lie for the night, not only on the pavement, but (if so favoured) in the high and dry chamber formed by the spacious triforium over the north aisle, awaiting an early Mass. The primitive west front, then, had become but a wall of partition; and above its central portal, where the round arched west windows had been, ran now a kind of broad, arcaded tribune, in full view of the entire length of the church. In the midst of it stood an altar; and here perhaps, the priest who officiated being visible to the whole assembled multitude east and west, the early Mass was said.

The great vestibule was finished about forty years after the completion of the nave, towards the middle of the twelfth century. And here, in the great pier-arches, and in the eastern bay of the vault, still with the large masonry, the large, flat, unmoulded surfaces, and amid the fantastic carvings of the Romanesque building about it, the Pointed style, determined yet discreet, makes itself felt—makes itself felt by appearing, if not for the first time, yet for the first time in the organic or systematic development of French architecture. Not in the unambitious *façade* of Saint-Denis, nor in the austere aisles of Sens, but at Vézelay, in this grandiose fabric, so worthy of the event, Viollet-le-Duc would

fain see the birthplace of the Pointed style. Here at last, with no sense of contrast, but by way of veritable "transition," and as if by its own matured strength, the round arch breaks into the double curve, *les arcs brisés*, with a wonderful access of grace. And the imaginative effect is forthwith enlarged. Beyond, far beyond, what is actually presented to the eye in that peculiar curvature, its mysterious grace, and by the stateliness, the elevation of the ogival method of vaulting, the imagination is stirred to present one with what belongs properly to it alone. The masonry, though large, is nicely fitted; a large light is admitted through the now fully pronounced Gothic windows towards the west. At Amiens we found the Gothic spirit, reigning there exclusively, to be a restless one. At Vézelay, where it breathes for the first time amid the heavy masses of the old imperial style, it breathes the very genius of monastic repose. And then, whereas at Amiens, and still more at Beauvais, at Saint-Quentin, you wonder how these monuments of the past can have endured so long, in strictly monastic Vézelay you have a sense of freshness, such as, in spite of their ruin, we perceive in the buildings of Greece. We enjoy here not so much, as at Amiens, the sentiment of antiquity, but that of eternal duration.

But let me place you once more where we stood for a while, on entering by the doorway

in the midst of the long southern aisle. Cross the aisle, and gather now in one view the perspective of the whole. Away on the left hand the eye is drawn upward to the tranquil light of the vaults of the fore-church, seeming doubtless the more spacious because partly concealed from us by the wall of partition below. But on the right hand, towards the east, as if with the set purpose of a striking architectural contrast, an instruction as to the place of this or that manner in the architectural series, the long, tunnel-like, military work of the Romanesque nave opens wide into the exhilarating daylight of choir and transepts, in the sort of Gothic Bernard would have welcomed, with a vault rising now high above the roof-line of the body of the church, *sicut lilium excelsum.* The simple flowers, the *flora*, of the early Pointed style, which could never have looked at home as an element in the half-savage decoration of the nave, seem to be growing here upon the sheaves of slender, reedy pillars, as if naturally in the carved stone. Even here indeed, Roman, or Romanesque, taste still lingers proudly in the monolith columns of the *chevet*. Externally, we may note with what dexterity the Gothic choir has been inserted into its place, below and within the great buttresses of the earlier Romanesque one.

Visitors to the great church of Assisi have sometimes found a kind of parable in the threefold

ascent from the dark crypt where the body of Saint Francis lies, through the gloomy "lower" church, into the height and breadth, the physical and symbolic "illumination," of the church above. At Vézelay that kind of contrast suggests itself in one view; the hopeful, but transitory, glory upon which one enters; the long, darksome, central avenue; the "open vision" into which it conducts us. As a symbol of resurrection, its choir is a fitting diadem to the church of the Magdalen, whose remains the monks meant it to cover.

And yet, after all, notwithstanding this assertion of the superiority (are we so to call it?) of the new Gothic way, perhaps by the very force of contrast, the *Madeleine* of Vézelay is still pre-eminently a Romanesque, and thereby the typically monastic, church. In spite of restoration even, as we linger here, the impression of the monastic Middle Age, of a very exclusive monasticism, that has verily turned its back upon common life, jealously closed inward upon itself, is a singularly weighty one; the more so because, as the peasant said when asked the way to an old sanctuary that had fallen to the occupation of farm-labourers, and was now deserted even by them: *Maintenant il n'y a personne là.*

APOLLO IN PICARDY[1]

"CONSECUTIVE upon Apollo in all his solar fervour and effulgence," says a writer of Teutonic proclivities, "we may discern even among the Greeks themselves, elusively, as would be natural with such a being, almost like a mock sun amid the mists, the northern or ultra-northern sun-god. In hints and fragments the lexicographers and others have told us something of this Hyperborean Apollo, fancies about him which evidence some knowledge of the Land of the Midnight Sun, of the sun's ways among the Laplanders, of a hoary summer breathing very softly on the violet beds, or say, the London-pride and crab-apples, provided for those meagre people, somewhere amid the remoteness of their icy seas. In such wise Apollo had already anticipated his sad fortunes in the Middle Age as a god definitely in exile, driven north of the Alps, and even here ever in flight before the summer. Summer indeed he leaves now to the management of

[1] Published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, Nov. 1893, and now reprinted by the kind permission of the proprietors.

others, finding his way from France and Germany to still paler countries, yet making or taking with him always a certain seductive summer-in-winter, though also with a divine or titanic regret, a titanic revolt in his heart, and consequent inversion at times of his old beneficent and properly solar doings. For his favours, his fallacious good-humour, which has in truth a touch of malign magic about it, he makes men pay sometimes a terrible price, and is in fact a devil!"

Devilry, devil's work:—traces of such you might fancy were to be found in a certain manuscript volume taken from an old monastic library in France at the Revolution. It presented a strange example of a cold and very reasonable spirit disturbed suddenly, thrown off its balance, as by a violent beam, a blaze of new light, revealing, as it glanced here and there, a hundred truths unguessed at before, yet a curse, as it turned out, to its receiver, in dividing hopelessly against itself the well-ordered kingdom of his thought. Twelfth volume of a dry enough treatise on mathematics, applied, still with no relaxation of strict method, to astronomy and music, it should have concluded that work, and therewith the second period of the life of its author, by drawing tight together the threads of a long and intricate argument. In effect however, it began, or, in perturbed manner, and as

Saint-Jean, on the other hand, shuddered at the view, at the thoughts it suggested to him; thoughts of unhallowed wild places, where the old heathen had worshipped "stocks and stones," and where their wickedness might still survive them in something worse than mischievous tricks of nature, such as you might read of in Ovid, whose verses, however, he for his part had never so much as touched with a finger. He gave thanks rather, that his vocation to the abstract sciences had kept him far apart from the whole crew of miscreant poets—Abode of demons.

Thither nevertheless he was now to depart, sent to the Grange or *Obedience* of Notre-Dame De-Pratis by the aged Abbot (about to resign in his favour) for the benefit of his body's health, a little impaired at last by long intellectual effort, yet so invaluable to the community. But let him beware! whispered his dearest friend, who shared those strange misgivings, let him "take heed to his ways" when he was come to that place. "The mere contact of one's feet with its soil might change one." And that same night, disturbed perhaps by thoughts of the coming journey with which his brain was full, Prior Saint-Jean himself dreamed vividly, as he had been little used to do. He saw the very place in which he lay (he knew it! his little inner cell, the brown doors, the white breadth of wall, the black crucifix upon it) alight, alight

softly; and looking, as he fancied, from the window, saw also a low circlet of soundless flame, waving, licking daintily up the black sky, but harmless, beautiful, closing in upon that round dark space in the midst, which was the earth. He seemed to feel upon his shoulder just then the touch of his friend beside him. "It is hell-fire!" he said.

The Prior took with him a very youthful though devoted companion—Hyacinthus, the pet of the community. They laughed admiringly at the rebellious masses of his black hair, with blue in the depths of it, like the wings of the swallow, which refused to conform to the monkish pattern. It only grew twofold, crown upon crown, after the half-yearly shaving. And he was as neat and serviceable as he was delightful to be with. Prior Saint-Jean, then, and the boy started before daybreak for the long journey; onwards, till darkness, a soft twilight rather, was around them again. How unlike a winter night it seemed, the further they went through the endless, lonely, turf-grown tracts, and along the edge of a valley, at length—*vallis monachorum*, monksvale —taken aback by its sudden steepness and depth, as of an immense oval cup sunken in the grassy upland, over which a golden moon now shone broadly. Ah! there it was at last, the white Grange, the white gable of the chapel apart amid a few scattered white gravestones, the white flocks crouched about on the hoar-frost,

like the white clouds, packed somewhat heavily on the horizon, and *nacrés* as the clouds of June, with their own light and heat in them, in their hollows, you might fancy.

From the very first, the atmosphere, the light, the influence of things, seemed different from what they knew; and how distant already the dark buildings of their home! Was there the breath of surviving summer blossom on the air? Now and then came a gentle, comfortable bleating from the folds, and themselves slept soundly at last in the great open upper chamber of the Grange; were awakened by the sound of thunder. Strange, in the late November night! It had parted, however, with its torrid fierceness; modulated by distance, seemed to break away into musical notes. And the lightning lingered along with it, but glancing softly; was in truth an aurora, such as persisted month after month on the northern sky as they sojourned here. Like Prospero's enchanted island, the whole place was "full of noises." The wind it might have been, passing over metallic strings, but that they were audible even when the night was breathless.

So like veritable music, however, were they on that first night that, upon reflexion, the Prior climbed softly the winding stair down which they appeared to flow, to the great *solar* among the beams of the roof, where the farm produce lay stored. A flood of moonlight now fell through the unshuttered dormer-windows; and,

under the glow of a lamp hanging from the low rafters, Prior Saint-Jean seemed to be looking for the first time on the human form, on the old Adam fresh from his Maker's hand. A servant of the house, or farm-labourer, perhaps !—fallen asleep there by chance on the fleeces heaped like golden stuff high in all the corners of the place. A serf ! But what unserflike ease, how lordly, or godlike rather, in the posture ! Could one fancy a single curve bettered in the rich, warm, white limbs ; in the haughty features of the face, with the golden hair, tied in a mystic knot, fallen down across the inspired brow ? And yet what gentle sweetness also in the natural movement of the bosom, the throat, the lips, of the sleeper ! Could that be diabolical, and really spotted with unseen evil, which was so spotless to the eye ? The rude sandals of the monastic serf lay beside him apart, and all around was of the roughest, excepting only two strange objects lying within reach (even in their own renowned treasury Prior Saint-Jean had not seen the like of them), a harp, or some such instrument, of silver-gilt once, but the gold had mostly passed from it, and a bow, fashioned somehow of the same precious substance. The very form of these things filled his mind with inexplicable misgivings. He repeated a befitting collect, and trod softly away.

It was in truth but a rude place to which they were come. But, after life in the

monastery, the severe discipline of which the Prior himself had done much to restore, there was luxury in the free, self-chosen hours, the irregular fare, in doing pretty much as one pleased, in the sweet novelties of the country; to the boy Hyacinth especially, who forgot himself, or rather found his true self for the first time. Girding up his heavy frock, which he laid aside erelong altogether to go in his coarse linen smock only, he seemed a monastic novice no longer; yet, in his natural gladness, was found more companionable than ever by his senior, surprised, delighted, for his part, at the fresh springing of his brain, the spring of his footsteps over the close greensward, as if smoothed by the art of man. Cause of his renewed health, or concurrent with its effects, the air here might have been that of a veritable paradise, still unspoiled. "Could there be unnatural magic," he asked himself again, "any secret evil, lurking in these tranquil vale-sides, in their sweet low pastures, in the belt of scattered woodland above them, in the rills of pure water which lisped from the open down beyond?" Making what was really a boy's experience, he had a wholly boyish delight in his holiday, and certainly did not reflect how much we beget for ourselves in what we see and feel, nor how far a certain diffused music in the very breath of the place was the creation of his own ear or brain.

That strange enigmatic owner of the harp and the bow, whom he had found sleeping so divinely, actually waited on them the next morning with all obsequiousness, stirred the great fire of peat, adjusted duly their monkish attire, laid their meal. It seemed an odd thing to be served thus, like St. Jerome by the lion, as if by some imperiously beautiful wild animal tamed. You hesitated to permit, were a little afraid of, his services. Their silent tonsured porter himself, contrast grim enough to any creature of that kind, had been so far seduced as to permit him to sleep there in the Grange, as he loved to do, instead of in ruder, rougher quarters; and, coaxed into odd garrulity on this one matter, told the new-comers the little he knew, with much also that he only suspected, about him; among other things, as to the origin of those precious objects, which might have belonged to some sanctuary or noble house, found thus in the possession of a mere labourer, who is no Frenchman, but a pagan, or gipsy, white as he looks, from far south or east, and who works or plays furtively, by night for the most part, returning to sleep awhile before daybreak. The other herdsmen of the valley are bond-servants, but he a hireling at will, though coming regularly at a certain season. He has come thus for any number of years past, though seemingly never grown older (as the speaker reflects), singing his way meagrely from farm to farm, to the sound of

his harp. His name?—It was scarcely a name at all, in the diffident syllables he uttered in answer to that question, on first coming there; but of names known to them it came nearest to a malignant one in Scripture, Apollyon. Apollyon had a just discernible tonsure, but probably no right to it.

Well skilled in architecture, Prior Saint-Jean was set, by way of a holiday task, to superintend the completion of the great monastic barn then in building. The visitor admires it still; perhaps supposes it, with its noble aisle, though set north and south, to be a desecrated church. If he be an expert in such matters, he will remark a sort of classical harmony in its broad, very simple proportions, with a certain suppression of Gothic emphasis, more especially in that peculiarly Gothic feature, the buttresses, scarcely marking the unbroken, windowless walls, which rise very straight, taking the sun placidly. The silver-grey stone, cut, if it came from this neighbourhood at all, from some now forgotten quarry, has the fine, close-grained texture of antique marble. The great northern gable is almost a classic pediment. The horizontal lines of plinth and ridge and cornice are kept unbroken, the roof of sea-grey slates being pitched less angularly than is usual in this rainy clime. A welcome contrast, the Prior thought it, to the sort of architectural nightmare he came from. He found the structure already more than half-

way up, the low squat pillars ready for their capitals.

Yes! it must have so happened often in the Middle Age, as you feel convinced, in looking sometimes at medieval building. Style must have changed under the very hands of men who were no wilful innovators. Thus it was here, in the later work of Prior Saint-Jean, all unconsciously. The mysterious harper sat there always, at the topmost point achieved; played, idly enough it might seem, on his precious instrument, but kept in fact the hard taxed workmen literally in tune, working for once with a ready will, and, so to speak, with really inventive hands—working expeditiously, in this favourable weather, till far into the night, as they joined unbidden in a chorus, which hushed, or rather turned to music, the noise of their chipping. It was hardly noise at all, even in the night-time. Now and again Brother Apollyon descended nimbly to surprise them, at an opportune moment, by the display of an immense strength. A great cheer exploded suddenly, as single-handed he heaved a massive stone into its place. He seemed to have no sense of weight: "Put there by the devil!" the modern villager assures you.

With a change then, not so much of style as of temper, of management, in the application of acknowledged rules, Prior Saint-Jean shaping only, adapting, simplifying, partly with a view

to economy, not the heavy stones only, but the heavy manner of using them, turned light. With no pronounced ornamentation, it is as if in the upper story ponderous root and stem blossomed gracefully, blossomed in cornice and capital and pliant arch-line, as vigorous as they were graceful, and rose on high quickly. Almost suddenly tie-beam and rafter knit themselves together into the stone, and the dark, dry, roomy place was closed in securely to this day. Mere audible music, certainly, had counted for something in the operations of an art, held at its best (as we know) to be a sort of music made visible. That idle singer, one might fancy, by an art beyond art, had attracted beams and stones into their fit places. And there, sure enough, he still sits, as a final decorative touch, by way of apex on the gable which looks northward, though much weather-worn, and with an ugly gap between the shoulder and the fingers on the harp,[1] as if, literally, he had cut off his right hand and put it from him :—King David, or an angel? guesses the careless tourist. The space below has been lettered. After a little puzzling you recognise there the relics of a familiar verse from a Latin psalm : *Nisi Dominus ædificaverit domum*, and the rest : inscribed as well as may be in Greek characters. Prior Saint-Jean caused it to be so inscribed, absurdly, during his last days there.

[1] Or sundial, as some maintain, though turned from the south.

And is not the human body, too, a building, with architectural laws, a structure, tending by the very forces which primarily held it together to drop asunder in time? Not in vain, it seemed, had Prior Saint-Jean come to this mystic place for the improvement of his body's health. Thenceforth that fleshly tabernacle had housed him, had housed his cunning, overwrought and excitable soul, ever the better day by day, and he began to feel his bodily health to be a positive quality or force, the presence near him of that singular being having surely something to do with this result. He and his fascinations, his music, himself, might at least be taken for an embodiment of all those genial influences of earth and sky, and the easy ways of living here, which made him turn, with less of an effort than he had known for many years past, to his daily tasks, and sink so regularly, so immediately, to wholesome rest on returning from them. It was as if Brother Apollyon himself abhorred the spectacle of distress, and mainly for his own satisfaction charmed away other people's maladies. The mere touch of that ice-cold hand, laid on the feverish brow, when the Prior lapsed from time to time into his former troubles, certainly calmed the respiration of a troubled sleeper. Was there magic in it, not wholly natural? The hand might have been a dead one. But then, was it surprising, after all, that the

methods of curing men's maladies, as being in very deed the fruit of sin, should have something strange and unlooked-for about them, like some of those Old Testament healings and purifications which the Prior's biblical lore suggested to him? Yet Brother Apollyon, if their surly *Janitor*, in his less kindly moments, spoke truly, himself greatly needed purification, being not only a thief, but a homicide in hiding from the law. Nay, once, on his annual return from southern or eastern lands, he had been observed on his way along the streets of the great town literally scattering the seeds of disease till his serpent-skin bag was empty. And within seven days the "black death" was there, reaping its thousands. As a wise man declared, he who can best cure disease can also most cunningly engender it.

In short, these creatures of rule, these "regulars," the Prior and his companion, were come in contact for the first time in their lives with the power of untutored natural impulse, of natural inspiration. The boy experienced it immediately in the games which suited his years, but which he had never so much as seen before; as his superior was to undergo its influence by-and-by in serious study. By night chiefly, in its long, continuous twilights, Hyacinth became really a boy at last, with immense gaiety; eyes, hands and feet awake, expanding, as he raced his comrade over the

turf, with the conical Druidic stone for a goal, or wrestled lithely enough with him, though as with a rock; or, taking the silver bow in hand for a moment, transfixed a mark, next a bird, on the bough, on the wing, shedding blood for the first time, with a boy's delight, a boy's remorse. Friend Apollyon seemed able to draw the wild animals too, to share their sport, yet not altogether kindly. Tired, surfeited, he destroys them when his game with them is at an end; breaks the toy; deftly snaps asunder the fragile back. Though all alike would come at his call, or the sound of his harp, he had his preferences; and warred in the night-time, as if on principle, against the creatures of the day. The small furry thing he pierced with his arrow fled to him nevertheless caressingly, with broken limb, to die palpitating in his hand. In this wonderful season, the migratory birds, from Norway, from Britain beyond the seas, came there as usual on the north wind, with sudden tumult of wings; but went that year no further, and by Christmas-time had built their nests, filling that belt of woodland around the vale with the chatter of their business and love quarrels. In turn they drew after them strangers no one here had ever known before; the like of which Hyacinth, who knew his bestiary, had never seen even in a picture. The wild-cat, the wild-swan—the boy peeped on these wonders as they floated over the vale, or

glided with unwonted confidence over its turf, under the moonlight, or that frequent continuous aurora which was not the dawn. Even the modest rivulets of the hill-side felt that influence, and "lisped" no longer, but babbled as they leapt, like mountain streams, exposing their rocky bed. Were they angry, as they ran red sometimes with blood-drops from the stricken bird caught there by rock or bough, as it fell with rent breast among the waves?

But say, think, what you might against him, the pagan outlaw was worth his hire as a herdsman; seemingly loved his sheep; was an "affectionate shepherd"; cured their diseases; brought them easily to the birth, and if they strayed afar would bring them back tenderly upon his shoulders. Monastic persons would have seen that image many times before. Yet if Apollyon looked like the great carved figure over the low doorway of their place of penitence at home, that could be but an accident, or perhaps a deceit; so closely akin to those soulless creatures did he still seem to the wondering Prior,—immersed in, or actually a part of, that irredeemable natural world he had dreaded so greatly ere he came hither. And was he after all making terms with it now, in the seductive person of this mysterious being—man or demon —suspected of murder; who has an air of unfathomable evil about him as from a distant but ineffaceable past, and a sort of heathen

understanding with the dark realm of matter; who is bringing the simple people, the women and lovesick lads, back to those caves and cromlechs and blasted trees, resorts of old godless secret-telling? And still he has all his own way with beasts and man, with the Prior himself, much as all alike distrust him.

Most conspicuous in the little group of buildings, a feudal tower of goodly white stone, cylindrical and smoothly polished without to hinder the ascent of creeping things, and snugly plastered within to resist the damp, was the pigeon-house—a veritable feudal tower, a veritable feudal *plaisance* of birds, which the common people dared not so much as ruffle. About a thousand of them were housed there, each in its little chamber, encouraged to grow plump, and to breed, in perfect self-content. From perch to perch of the great axle-tree in the centre, monastic feet might climb, gentle monastic hands pass round to every tiny compartment in turn. The arms of the monastery were carved on the keystone of the doorway, and the tower finished in a conical roof, with becoming aerial *gaillardise*, with pretty dormer-windows for the inmates to pass in and out, little balconies for brooding in the sun, little awnings to protect them from rough breezes, and a great weather-vane, on which the birds crowded for the chance of a ride. If the peasants of that day, whose small fields they plundered, noting all this, per-

haps envied the birds dumbly, for the brethren, on the other hand, it was a constant delight to watch the feathered brotherhood, which supplied likewise their daintiest fare. Who then, what hawk, or wild-cat, or other savage beast, had ravaged it so wantonly, so very cruelly destroyed the bright creatures in a single night —broken backs, rent away limbs, pierced the wings? And what was that object there below? The silver harp surely, lying broken likewise on the sanded floor, soaking in the pale milky blood and torn plumage.

Apollyon sobbed and wept audibly as he went about his ordinary doings next day, for once fully, though very sadly, awake in it; and towards evening, when the villagers came to the Prior to confess themselves, the Feast of the Nativity being now at hand, he too came along with them in his place meekly, like any other penitent, touched the lustral water devoutly, knew all the ways, seemed to desire absolution from some guilt of blood heavier than the slaughter of beast or bird. The Prior and his attendant, on their side, are reminded that by this time they have wellnigh forgotten the monastic duties still incumbent upon them, especially in that matter of the "Offices." On the vigil of the feast, however, Brother Apollyon himself summoned the devout to Midnight Mass with the great bell, which had hung silent for a generation, wedged in immoveably by a beam of

the cradle fallen out of its place. With an immense effort of strength he relieved it, hitched the bell back upon its wheel; the thick rust cracked on the hinges, and the strokes tolled forth betimes, with a hundred querulous, quaint creatures, bats and owls, circling stupidly in the waves of sound, but allowed to settle back again undisturbedly into their beds.

People and priest, the Prior, vested as well as might be, with Hyacinth as "server," come in due course, all alike amazed to find that frozen neglected place, with its low-browed vault and narrow windows, alight, and as if warmed with flowers from a summer more radiant far than that of France, with ilex and laurel—gilt laurel—by way of holly and box. Prior Saint-Jean felt that he had never really seen flowers before. Somewhat later they and the like of them seemed to have grown into and over his brain; to have degraded the scientific and abstract outlines of things into a tangle of useless ornament. Whence were they procured? From what height, or hellish depth perhaps? Apollyon, who entered the chapel just then, as if quite naturally, though with a bleating lamb in his bosom ("dropped" thus early in that wonderful season) by way of an offering, took his place at the altar's very foot, and drawing forth his harp, now restrung, at the right moment, turned to real silvery music the hoarse *Gloria in Excelsis* of those rude worshippers, still

shrinking from him, while they listened in a little circle, as he stood there in his outlandish attire of skins strangely spotted and striped. With that however the Mass broke off unconsummated. The Prior felt obliged to desist from the sacred office, and had left the altar hurriedly.

But Brother Apollyon put his strange attire aside next day, and in a much-worn monk's frock, drawn forth from a dark corner, came with them, still like a penitent, when they turned once more to their neglected studies somewhat sadly. See them then, after a collect for "Light" repeated by Hyacinth, skull-cap in hand, seated at their desks in the little *scriptorium*, panelled off from their living-room on the first floor, while the Prior makes an effort to recover the last thought of his long-suspended work, in the execution of which the boy is to assist with his skilful pen. The great glazed windows remain open; admit, as if already on the soft air of spring, what seems like a stream of flowery odours, the entire moonlit scene, with the thorn bushes on the vale-side prematurely bursting into blossom, and the sound of birds and flocks emphasising the deep silence of the night.

Apollyon then, as if by habit, as he had shared all their occupations of late, had taken his seat beside them, meekly enough, at first with the manner of a mere suppliant for the

crumbs of their high studies. But, straightway again, he surprises by more than racing forward incredibly on the road to facts, and from facts to luminous doctrine; Prior Saint-Jean himself, in comparison, seeming to lag incompetently behind. He can but wonder at this strange scholar's knowledge of a distant past, evidenced in his familiarity (it was as if he might once have spoken them) with the dead languages in which their text-books are written. There was more surely than the utmost merely natural acuteness in his guesses as to the words intended by those crabbed contractions, of their meaning, in his sense of allusions and the like. An ineffaceable memory it might rather seem of the entire world of which those languages had been the living speech, once more vividly awake under the Prior's cross-questioning, and now more than supplementing his own laborious search.

And at last something of the same kind happens with himself. Had he, on his way hither from the convent, passed unwittingly through some river or rivulet of Lethe, that had carried away from him all his so carefully accumulated intellectual baggage of fact and theory? The hard and abstract laws, or theory of the laws, of music, of the stars, of mechanical structure, in hard and abstract *formulæ*, adding to the abstract austerity of the man, seemed to have deserted him; to be revived in him again

however, at the contact of this extraordinary pupil or fellow-inquirer, though in a very different guise or attitude towards himself, as matters no longer to be reasoned upon and understood, but to be seen rather, to be looked at and heard. Did not he *see* the angle of the earth's axis with the ecliptic, the deflexions of the stars from their proper orbits with fatal results here below, and the earth—wicked, unscriptural truth !—moving round the sun, and those flashes of the eternal and unorbed light such as bring water, flowers, living things, out of the rocks, the dust ? The singing of the planets : he could hear it, and might in time effect its notation. Having seen and heard, he might erelong speak also, truly and with authority, on such matters. Could one but arrest it for one's self, for final transference to others, on the written or printed page —this beam of insight, or of inspiration !

Alas ! one result of its coming was that it encouraged delay. If he set hand to the page, the firm halo, here a moment since, was gone, had flitted capriciously to the wall ; passed next through the window, to the wall of the garden ; was dancing back in another moment upon the innermost walls of one's own miserable brain, to swell there—that astounding white light !—rising steadily in the cup, the mental receptacle, till it overflowed, and he lay faint and drowning in it. Or he rose above it, as above a great liquid surface, and hung giddily over it—light,

simple, and absolute—ere he fell. Or there was a battle between light and darkness around him, with no way of escape from the baffling strokes, the lightning flashes; flashes of blindness one might rather call them. In truth, the intuitions of the night (for they worked still, or tried to work, by night) became the sickly nightmares of the day, in which Prior Saint-Jean slept, or tried to sleep, or lay sometimes in a trance without food for many hours, from which he would spring up suddenly to crowd, against time, as much as he could into his book with pen or brush; winged flowers, or stars with human limbs and faces, still intruding themselves, or mere notes of light and darkness from the actual horizon. There it all is still in the faded gold and colours of the ancient volume—"Prior Saint-Jean's folly":—till on a sudden the hand collapses, as he becomes aware of that real, prosaic, broad daylight lying harsh upon the page, making his delicately toned auroras seem but a patch of grey, and himself for a moment, with a sigh of disgust, of self-reproach, to be his old unimpassioned monastic self once more.

The boy, for his part, was grown at last full of misgiving. He ponders how he may get the Prior away, or escape by himself, find his way back to the convent and report his master's condition, his strange loss of memory for names and the like, his illusions about himself and

others. And he is more than ever distrustful now of his late beloved playmate, who quietly obstructs any movement of the kind, and has undertaken, at the Prior's entreaty, to draw down the moon from the sky, for some shameful price, known to the magicians of that day.

Yet Apollyon, at all events, would still play as gaily as ever on occasion. Hitherto they had played as young animals do; without playthings namely, applying hand or foot only to their games. But it happened about this time that a grave was dug, a grave of unusual depth, to be ready, in that fiery plaguesome weather, the first heat of veritable summer come suddenly, for the body of an ancient villager then at the point of death. In the drowsy afternoon Hyacinth awakes Apollyon, to see the strange thing he has found at the grave-side, among the gravel and yellow bones cast up there. He had wrested it with difficulty from the hands of the half-crippled gravedigger, at eighty still excitable by the mere touch of metal.

The like of it had indeed been found before, within living memory, in this place of immemorial use as a graveyard—"Devil's penny-pieces" people called them. Five such lay hidden already in a dark corner of the chapel, to keep them from superstitious employment. To-day they came out of hiding at last. Apollyon knew the use of the thing at a glance; had put an expert hand to it forthwith; poises the

discus; sets it wheeling. How easily it spins round under one's arm, in the groove of the bent fingers, slips thence smoothly like a knife flung from its sheath, as if for a course of perpetual motion! *Splendescit eundo:* it seems to burn as it goes. It is heavier many times than it looks, and sharp-edged. By night they have scoured and polished the corroded surfaces. Apollyon promises Hyacinth and himself rare sport in the cool of the evening—an evening however, as it turned out, not less breathless than the day.

In the great heat Apollyon had flung aside, as if for ever, the last sorry remnant of his workman's attire, and challenged the boy to do the same. On the moonlit turf there, crouching, right foot foremost, and with face turned backwards to the disk in his right hand, his whole body, in that moment of rest, full of the circular motion he is about to commit to it, he seemed—beautiful pale spectre—to shine from within with a light of his own, like that of the glow-worm in the thicket, or the dead and rotten roots of the old trees. And as if they had a proper motion of their own in them, the disks, the quoits, ran, amid the delighted shouts and laughter of the boy, as he follows, scarcely less swift, to score the points of their contact with the grass. Again and again they recommence, forgetful of the hours; while the death-bell cries out harshly for the grave's occupant, and

the corpse itself is borne along stealthily not far from them, and, unnoticed by either, the entire aspect of things has changed. Under the overcast sky it is in darkness they are playing, by guess and touch chiefly; and suddenly an icy blast of wind has lifted the roof from the old chapel, the trees are moaning in wild circular motion, and their devil's penny-piece, when Apollyon throws it for the last time, is itself but a twirling leaf in the wind, till it sinks edgewise, sawing through the boy's face, uplifted in the dark to trace it, crushing in the tender skull upon the brain.

His shout of laughter is turned in an instant to a cry of pain, of reproach; and in that which echoed it—an immense cry, as from the very heart of ancient tragedy, over the Picard wolds—it was as if that half-extinguished deity, its proper immensity, its old greatness and power, were restored for a moment. The villagers in their beds wondered. It was like the sound of some natural catastrophe.

The storm which followed was still in possession, still moving tearfully among the poplar groves, though it had spent its heat and thunder. The last drops of the blood of Hyacinth still trickled through the thick masses of dark hair, where the tonsure had been. An abundant rain, mingling with the copious purple stream, had coloured the grass all around where the corpse lay, stealing afar in tiny channels.

So it was, when Apollyon, reduced in the morning light to his smaller self, came with the other people of the Grange to gaze, to enquire, and found the Prior already there, speechless. Clearly this was no lightning stroke; and Apollyon straightway conceives certain very human fears that, coming upon those antecedent suspicions of himself, the boy's death may be thought the result of intention on his part. He proposes to bury the body at once, with no delay for religious rites, in that still uncovered grave, the bearers having fled from it in the tempest.

And next day, fulfilling his annual custom, he went his way northward, without a word of farewell to Prior Saint-Jean, whom he leaves in fact under suspicion of murder. From the profound slumber which had followed the excitements of yesterday, the Prior awoke amid the sound of voices, the voices of the peasants singing no Christian song, certainly, but a song which Apollyon himself had taught them, to dismiss him on his journey. For, strange or not as it might be, they loved him, perhaps in spite of themselves; would certainly protect him at any risk. Prior Saint-Jean arose, and looked forth—with wonder. A brief spell of sunshine amid the rain had clothed the vale with a marvel of blue flowers, if it were not rather with remnants of the blue sky itself, fallen among the woods there. But there too, in the little court-

yard, the officers of justice are already in waiting to take him, on the charge of having caused the death of his young server by violence, in a fit of mania, induced by dissolute living in that solitary place. One hitherto so prosperous in life would, of course, have his enemies.

The monastic authorities, however, claim him from the secular power, to correct his offence in their own way, and with friendly interpretation of the facts. Madness, however wicked, being still madness, Prior, now simple Brother, Saint-Jean, is detained in a sufficiently cheerful apartment, in a region of the atmosphere likely to restore lost wits, whence indeed he can still see the country—*vallis monachorum*. The one desire which from time to time fitfully rouses him again to animation for a few moments is to return thither. Here then he remains in peace, ostensibly for the completion of his great work. He never again set pen to it, consistent and clear now on nothing save that longing to be once more at the Grange, that he may get well, or die and be well so. He is like the damned spirit, think some of the brethren, saying "I will return to the house whence I came out." Gazing thither daily for many hours, he would mistake mere blue distance, when that was visible, for blue flowers, for hyacinths, and wept at the sight; though blue, as he observed, was the colour of Holy Mary's gown on the illuminated page, the colour of hope, of merciful

omnipresent deity. The necessary permission came with difficulty, just too late. Brother Saint-Jean died, standing upright with an effort to gaze forth once more, amid the preparations for his departure.

THE CHILD IN THE HOUSE[1]

As Florian Deleal walked, one hot afternoon, he overtook by the wayside a poor aged man, and, as he seemed weary with the road, helped him on with the burden which he carried, a certain distance. And as the man told his story, it chanced that he named the place, a little place in the neighbourhood of a great city, where Florian had passed his earliest years, but which he had never since seen, and, the story told, went forward on his journey comforted. And that night, like a reward for his pity, a dream of that place came to Florian, a dream which did for him the office of the finer sort of memory, bringing its object to mind with a great clearness, yet, as sometimes happens in dreams, raised a little above itself, and above ordinary retrospect. The true aspect of the place, especially of the house there in which he had lived as a child, the fashion of its doors, its hearths, its windows, the very scent upon the air of it, was with him in sleep for a season; only, with tints more musically blent on wall

[1] Published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Aug. 1878.

and floor, and some finer light and shadow running in and out along its curves and angles, and with all its little carvings daintier. He awoke with a sigh at the thought of almost thirty years which lay between him and that place, yet with a flutter of pleasure still within him at the fair light, as if it were a smile, upon it. And it happened that this accident of his dream was just the thing needed for the beginning of a certain design he then had in view, the noting, namely, of some things in the story of his spirit—in that process of brain-building by which we are, each one of us, what we are. With the image of the place so clear and favourable upon him, he fell to thinking of himself therein, and how his thoughts had grown up to him. In that half-spiritualised house he could watch the better, over again, the gradual expansion of the soul which had come to be there—of which indeed, through the law which makes the material objects about them so large an element in children's lives, it had actually become a part; inward and outward being woven through and through each other into one inextricable texture—half, tint and trace and accident of homely colour and form, from the wood and the bricks; half, mere soul-stuff, floated thither from who knows how far. In the house and garden of his dream he saw a child moving, and could divide the main streams at least of the winds that had played on

him, and study so the first stage in that mental journey.

The *old house*, as when Florian talked of it afterwards he always called it, (as all children do, who can recollect a change of home, soon enough but not too soon to mark a period in their lives) really was an old house; and an element of French descent in its inmates—descent from Watteau, the old court-painter, one of whose gallant pieces still hung in one of the rooms—might explain, together with some other things, a noticeable trimness and comely whiteness about everything there—the curtains, the couches, the paint on the walls with which the light and shadow played so delicately; might explain also the tolerance of the great poplar in the garden, a tree most often despised by English people, but which French people love, having observed a certain fresh way its leaves have of dealing with the wind, making it sound, in never so slight a stirring of the air, like running water.

The old-fashioned, low wainscoting went round the rooms, and up the staircase with carved balusters and shadowy angles, landing half-way up at a broad window, with a swallow's nest below the sill, and the blossom of an old pear-tree showing across it in late April, against the blue, below which the perfumed juice of the find of fallen fruit in autumn was so fresh. At the next turning came the closet which held on its deep shelves the best china. Little angel

faces and reedy flutings stood out round the fireplace of the children's room. And on the top of the house, above the large attic, where the white mice ran in the twilight—an infinite, unexplored wonderland of childish treasures, glass beads, empty scent-bottles still sweet, thrum of coloured silks, among its lumber—a flat space of roof, railed round, gave a view of the neighbouring steeples; for the house, as I said, stood near a great city, which sent up heavenwards, over the twisting weather-vanes, not seldom, its beds of rolling cloud and smoke, touched with storm or sunshine. But the child of whom I am writing did not hate the fog because of the crimson lights which fell from it sometimes upon the chimneys, and the whites which gleamed through its openings, on summer mornings, on turret or pavement. For it is false to suppose that a child's sense of beauty is dependent on any choiceness or special fineness, in the objects which present themselves to it, though this indeed comes to be the rule with most of us in later life; earlier, in some degree, we see inwardly; and the child finds for itself, and with unstinted delight, a difference for the sense, in those whites and reds through the smoke on very homely buildings, and in the gold of the dandelions at the road-side, just beyond the houses, where not a handful of earth is virgin and untouched, in the lack of better ministries to its desire of beauty.

This house then stood not far beyond the gloom and rumours of the town, among high garden-wall, bright all summer-time with Golden-rod, and brown-and-golden Wall-flower —*Flos Parietis*, as the children's Latin-reading father taught them to call it, while he was with them. Tracing back the threads of his complex spiritual habit, as he was used in after years to do, Florian found that he owed to the place many tones of sentiment afterwards customary with him, certain inward lights under which things most naturally presented themselves to him. The coming and going of travellers to the town along the way, the shadow of the streets, the sudden breath of the neighbouring gardens, the singular brightness of bright weather there, its singular darknesses which linked themselves in his mind to certain engraved illustrations in the old big Bible at home, the coolness of the dark, cavernous shops round the great church, with its giddy winding stair up to the pigeons and the bells—a citadel of peace in the heart of the trouble—all this acted on his childish fancy, so that ever afterwards the like aspects and incidents never failed to throw him into a well-recognised imaginative mood, seeming actually to have become a part of the texture of his mind. Also, Florian could trace home to this point a pervading preference in himself for a kind of comeliness and dignity, an *urbanity* literally, in modes of life, which he connected with the pale

people of towns, and which made him susceptible to a kind of exquisite satisfaction in the trimness and well-considered grace of certain things and persons he afterwards met with, here and there, in his way through the world.

So the child of whom I am writing lived on there quietly; things without thus ministering to him, as he sat daily at the window with the birdcage hanging below it, and his mother taught him to read, wondering at the ease with which he learned, and at the quickness of his memory. The perfume of the little flowers of the lime-tree fell through the air upon them like rain; while time seemed to move ever more slowly to the murmur of the bees in it, till it almost stood still on June afternoons. How insignificant, at the moment, seem the influences of the sensible things which are tossed and fall and lie about us, so, or so, in the environment of early childhood. How indelibly, as we afterwards discover, they affect us; with what capricious attractions and associations they figure themselves on the white paper, the smooth wax, of our ingenuous souls, as "with lead in the rock for ever," giving form and feature, and as it were assigned house-room in our memory, to early experiences of feeling and thought, which abide with us ever afterwards, thus, and not otherwise. The realities and passions, the rumours of the greater world without, steal in upon us, each by its own special little passage-way, through the wall of custom

about us; and never afterwards quite detach themselves from this or that accident, or trick, in the mode of their first entrance to us. Our susceptibilities, the discovery of our powers, manifold experiences—our various experiences of the coming and going of bodily pain, for instance—belong to this or the other well-remembered place in the material habitation—that little white room with the window across which the heavy blossoms could beat so peevishly in the wind, with just that particular catch or throb, such a sense of teasing in it, on gusty mornings; and the early habitation thus gradually becomes a sort of material shrine or sanctuary of sentiment; a system of visible symbolism interweaves itself through all our thoughts and passions; and irresistibly, little shapes, voices, accidents—the angle at which the sun in the morning fell on the pillow—become parts of the great chain wherewith we are bound.

Thus far, for Florian, what all this had determined was a peculiarly strong sense of home—so forcible a motive with all of us—prompting to us our customary love of the earth, and the larger part of our fear of death, that revulsion we have from it, as from something strange, untried, unfriendly; though life-long imprisonment, they tell you, and final banishment from home is a thing bitterer still; the looking forward to but a short space, a mere childish *goûter* and dessert of it, before the end, being so great a resource of

effort to pilgrims and wayfarers, and the soldier in distant quarters, and lending, in lack of that, some power of solace to the thought of sleep in the home churchyard, at least—dead cheek by dead cheek, and with the rain soaking in upon one from above.

So powerful is this instinct, and yet accidents like those I have been speaking of so mechanically determine it; its essence being indeed the early familiar, as constituting our ideal, or typical conception, of rest and security. Out of so many possible conditions, just this for you and that for me, brings ever the unmistakeable realisation of the delightful *chez soi;* this for the Englishman, for me and you, with the closely-drawn white curtain and the shaded lamp; that, quite other, for the wandering Arab, who folds his tent every morning, and makes his sleeping-place among haunted ruins, or in old tombs.

With Florian then the sense of home became singularly intense, his good fortune being that the special character of his home was in itself so essentially home-like. As after many wanderings I have come to fancy that some parts of Surrey and Kent are, for Englishmen, the true landscape, true home-counties, by right, partly, of a certain earthy warmth in the yellow of the sand below their gorse-bushes, and of a certain grey-blue mist after rain, in the hollows of the hills there, welcome to fatigued eyes, and never seen farther south; so I think that the sort of

house I have described, with precisely those proportions of red-brick and green, and with a just perceptible monotony in the subdued order of it, for its distinguishing note, is for Englishmen at least typically home-life. And so for Florian that general human instinct was reinforced by this special home-likeness in the place his wandering soul had happened to light on, as, in the second degree, its body and earthly tabernacle; the sense of harmony between his soul and its physical environment became, for a time at least, like perfectly played music, and the life led there singularly tranquil and filled with a curious sense of self-possession. The love of security, of an habitually undisputed standing-ground or sleeping-place, came to count for much in the generation and correcting of his thoughts, and afterwards as a salutary principle of restraint in all his wanderings of spirit. The wistful yearning towards home, in absence from it, as the shadows of evening deepened, and he followed in thought what was doing there from hour to hour, interpreted to him much of a yearning and regret he experienced afterwards, towards he knew not what, out of strange ways of feeling and thought in which, from time to time, his spirit found itself alone; and in the tears shed in such absences there seemed always to be some soul-subduing foretaste of what his last tears might be.

And the sense of security could hardly have

been deeper, the quiet of the child's soul being one with the quiet of its home, a place "inclosed" and "sealed." But upon this assured place, upon the child's assured soul which resembled it, there came floating in from the larger world without, as at windows left ajar unknowingly, or over the high garden walls, two streams of impressions, the sentiments of beauty and pain—recognitions of the visible, tangible, audible loveliness of things, as a very real and somewhat tyrannous element in them—and of the sorrow of the world, of grown people and children and animals, as a thing not to be put by in them. From this point he could trace two predominant processes of mental change in him—the growth of an almost diseased sensibility to the spectacle of suffering, and, parallel with this, the rapid growth of a certain capacity of fascination by bright colour and choice form—the sweet curvings, for instance, of the lips of those who seemed to him comely persons, modulated in such delicate unison to the things they said or sang,—marking early the activity in him of a more than customary sensuousness, "the lust of the eye," as the Preacher says, which might lead him, one day, how far! Could he have foreseen the weariness of the way! In music sometimes the two sorts of impressions came together, and he would weep, to the surprise of older people. Tears of joy too the child knew, also to older people's surprise; real tears, once, of relief from long-strung,

childish expectation, when he found returned at evening, with new roses in her cheeks, the little sister who had been to a place where there was a wood, and brought back for him a treasure of fallen acorns, and black crow's feathers, and his peace at finding her again near him mingled all night with some intimate sense of the distant forest, the rumour of its breezes, with the glossy blackbirds aslant and the branches lifted in them, and of the perfect nicety of the little cups that fell. So those two elementary apprehensions of the tenderness and of the colour in things grew apace in him, and were seen by him afterwards to send their roots back into the beginnings of life.

Let me note first some of the occasions of his recognition of the element of pain in things—incidents, now and again, which seemed suddenly to awake in him the whole force of that sentiment which Goethe has called the *Weltschmerz*, and in which the concentrated sorrow of the world seemed suddenly to lie heavy upon him. A book lay in an old book-case, of which he cared to remember one picture—a woman sitting, with hands bound behind her, the dress, the cap, the hair, folded with a simplicity which touched him strangely, as if not by her own hands, but with some ambiguous care at the hands of others—Queen Marie Antoinette, on her way to execution—we all remember David's drawing, meant merely to make her ridiculous. The face

that had been so high had learned to be mute and resistless; but out of its very resistlessness, seemed now to call on men to have pity, and forbear; and he took note of that, as he closed the book, as a thing to look at again, if he should at any time find himself tempted to be cruel. Again, he would never quite forget the appeal in the small sister's face, in the garden under the lilacs, terrified at a spider lighted on her sleeve. He could trace back to the look then noted a certain mercy he conceived always for people in fear, even of little things, which seemed to make him, though but for a moment, capable of almost any sacrifice of himself. Impressible, susceptible persons, indeed, who had had their sorrows, lived about him; and this sensibility was due in part to the tacit influence of their presence, enforcing upon him habitually the fact that there are those who pass their days, as a matter of course, in a sort of "going quietly." Most poignantly of all he could recall, in unfading minutest circumstance, the cry on the stair, sounding bitterly through the house, and struck into his soul for ever, of an aged woman, his father's sister, come now to announce his death in distant India; how it seemed to make the aged woman like a child again; and, he knew not why, but this fancy was full of pity to him. There were the little sorrows of the dumb animals too—of the white angora, with a dark tail like an ermine's, and a face like a

flower, who fell into a lingering sickness, and became quite delicately human in its valetudinarianism, and came to have a hundred different expressions of voice—how it grew worse and worse, till it began to feel the light too much for it, and at last, after one wild morning of pain, the little soul flickered away from the body, quite worn to death already, and now but feebly retaining it.

So he wanted another pet; and as there were starlings about the place, which could be taught to speak, one of them was caught, and he meant to treat it kindly; but in the night its young ones could be heard crying after it, and the responsive cry of the mother-bird towards them; and at last, with the first light, though not till after some debate with himself, he went down and opened the cage, and saw a sharp bound of the prisoner up to her nestlings; and therewith came the sense of remorse,—that he too was become an accomplice in moving, to the limit of his small power, the springs and handles of that great machine in things, constructed so ingeniously to play pain-fugues on the delicate nerve-work of living creatures.

I have remarked how, in the process of our brain-building, as the house of thought in which we live gets itself together, like some airy bird's-nest of floating thistle-down and chance straws, compact at last, little accidents have their consequence; and thus it happened that, as he

walked one evening, a garden gate, usually closed, stood open; and lo! within, a great red hawthorn in full flower, embossing heavily the bleached and twisted trunk and branches, so aged that there were but few green leaves thereon—a plumage of tender, crimson fire out of the heart of the dry wood. The perfume of the tree had now and again reached him, in the currents of the wind, over the wall, and he had wondered what might be behind it, and was now allowed to fill his arms with the flowers—flowers enough for all the old blue-china pots along the chimney-piece, making *fête* in the children's room. Was it some periodic moment in the expansion of soul within him, or mere trick of heat in the heavily-laden summer air? But the beauty of the thing struck home to him feverishly; and in dreams all night he loitered along a magic roadway of crimson flowers, which seemed to open ruddily in thick, fresh masses about his feet, and fill softly all the little hollows in the banks on either side. Always afterwards, summer by summer, as the flowers came on, the blossom of the red hawthorn still seemed to him absolutely the reddest of all things; and the goodly crimson, still alive in the works of old Venetian masters or old Flemish tapestries, called out always from afar the recollection of the flame in those perishing little petals, as it pulsed gradually out of them, kept long in the drawers of an old cabinet.

Also then, for the first time, he seemed to experience a passionateness in his relation to fair outward objects, an inexplicable excitement in their presence, which disturbed him, and from which he half longed to be free. A touch of regret or desire mingled all night with the remembered presence of the red flowers, and their perfume in the darkness about him; and the longing for some undivined, entire possession of them was the beginning of a revelation to him, growing ever clearer, with the coming of the gracious summer guise of fields and trees and persons in each succeeding year, of a certain, at times seemingly exclusive, predominance in his interests, of beautiful physical things, a kind of tyranny of the senses over him.

In later years he came upon philosophies which occupied him much in the estimate of the proportion of the sensuous and the ideal elements in human knowledge, the relative parts they bear in it; and, in his intellectual scheme, was led to assign very little to the abstract thought, and much to its sensible vehicle or occasion. Such metaphysical speculation did but reinforce what was instinctive in his way of receiving the world, and for him, everywhere, that sensible vehicle or occasion became, perhaps only too surely, the necessary concomitant of any perception of things, real enough to be of any weight or reckoning, in his house of thought. There were times when he could think of the

necessity he was under of associating all thoughts to touch and sight, as a sympathetic link between himself and actual, feeling, living objects; a protest in favour of real men and women against mere grey, unreal abstractions; and he remembered gratefully how the Christian religion, hardly less than the religion of the ancient Greeks, translating so much of its spiritual verity into things that may be seen, condescends in part to sanction this infirmity, if so it be, of our human existence, wherein the world of sense is so much with us, and welcomed this thought as a kind of keeper and sentinel over his soul therein. But certainly, he came more and more to be unable to care for, or think of soul but as in an actual body, or of any world but that wherein are water and trees, and where men and women look, so or so, and press actual hands. It was the trick even his pity learned, fastening those who suffered in anywise to his affections by a kind of sensible attachments. He would think of Julian, fallen into incurable sickness, as spoiled in the sweet blossom of his skin like pale amber, and his honey-like hair; of Cecil, early dead, as cut off from the lilies, from golden summer days, from women's voices; and then what comforted him a little was the thought of the turning of the child's flesh to violets in the turf above him. And thinking of the very poor, it was not the things which most men care most for that he yearned to give them;

but fairer roses, perhaps, and power to taste quite as they will, at their ease and not task-burdened, a certain desirable, clear light in the new morning, through which sometimes he had noticed them, quite unconscious of it, on their way to their early toil.

So he yielded himself to these things, to be played upon by them like a musical instrument, and began to note with deepening watchfulness, but always with some puzzled, unutterable longing in his enjoyment, the phases of the seasons and of the growing or waning day, down even to the shadowy changes wrought on bare wall or ceiling—the light cast up from the snow, bringing out their darkest angles; the brown light in the cloud, which meant rain; that almost too austere clearness, in the protracted light of the lengthening day, before warm weather began, as if it lingered but to make a severer workday, with the school-books opened earlier and later; that beam of June sunshine, at last, as he lay awake before the time, a way of gold-dust across the darkness; all the humming, the freshness, the perfume of the garden seemed to lie upon it—and coming in one afternoon in September, along the red gravel walk, to look for a basket of yellow crab-apples left in the cool, old parlour, he remembered it the more, and how the colours struck upon him, because a wasp on one bitten apple stung him, and he felt the passion of

sudden, severe pain. For this too brought its curious reflexions; and, in relief from it, he would wonder over it—how it had then been with him—puzzled at the depth of the charm or spell over him, which lay, for a little while at least, in the mere absence of pain; once, especially, when an older boy taught him to make flowers of sealing-wax, and he had burnt his hand badly at the lighted taper, and been unable to sleep. He remembered that also afterwards, as a sort of typical thing—a white vision of heat about him, clinging closely, through the languid scent of the ointments put upon the place to make it well.

Also, as he felt this pressure upon him of the sensible world, then, as often afterwards, there would come another sort of curious questioning how the last impressions of eye and ear might happen to him, how they would find him—the scent of the last flower, the soft yellowness of the last morning, the last recognition of some object of affection, hand or voice; it could not be but that the latest look of the eyes, before their final closing, would be strangely vivid; one would go with the hot tears, the cry, the touch of the wistful bystander, impressed how deeply on one! or would it be, perhaps, a mere frail retiring of all things, great or little, away from one, into a level distance?

For with this desire of physical beauty mingled itself early the fear of death—the fear of death

intensified by the desire of beauty. Hitherto he had never gazed upon dead faces, as sometimes, afterwards, at the *Morgue* in Paris, or in that fair cemetery at Munich, where all the dead must go and lie in state before burial, behind glass windows, among the flowers and incense and holy candles—the aged clergy with their sacred ornaments, the young men in their dancing-shoes and spotless white linen—after which visits, those waxen, resistless faces would always live with him for many days, making the broadest sunshine sickly. The child had heard indeed of the death of his father, and how, in the Indian station, a fever had taken him, so that though not in action he had yet died as a soldier; and hearing of the "resurrection of the just," he could think of him as still abroad in the world, somehow, for his protection—a grand, though perhaps rather terrible figure, in beautiful soldier's things, like the figure in the picture of Joshua's Vision in the Bible—and of that, round which the mourners moved so softly, and afterwards with such solemn singing, as but a worn-out garment left at a deserted lodging. So it was, until on a summer day he walked with his mother through a fair churchyard. In a bright dress he rambled among the graves, in the gay weather, and so came, in one corner, upon an open grave for a child—a dark space on the brilliant grass—the black mould lying heaped up round it, weighing down the little jewelled

branches of the dwarf rose-bushes in flower. And therewith came, full-grown, never wholly to leave him, with the certainty that even children do sometimes die, the physical horror of death, with its wholly selfish recoil from the association of lower forms of life, and the suffocating weight above. No benign, grave figure in beautiful soldier's things any longer abroad in the world for his protection! only a few poor, piteous bones; and above them, possibly, a certain sort of figure he hoped not to see. For sitting one day in the garden below an open window, he heard people talking, and could not but listen, how, in a sleepless hour, a sick woman had seen one of the dead sitting beside her, come to call her hence; and from the broken talk evolved with much clearness the notion that not all those dead people had really departed to the churchyard, nor were quite so motionless as they looked, but led a secret, half-fugitive life in their old homes, quite free by night, though sometimes visible in the day, dodging from room to room, with no great goodwill towards those who shared the place with them. All night the figure sat beside him in the reveries of his broken sleep, and was not quite gone in the morning—an odd, irreconcileable new member of the household, making the sweet familiar chambers unfriendly and suspect by its uncertain presence. He could have hated the dead he had pitied so, for being

thus. Afterwards he came to think of those poor, home-returning ghosts, which all men have fancied to themselves—the *revenants*—pathetically, as crying, or beating with vain hands at the doors, as the wind came, their cries distinguishable in it as a wilder inner note. But, always making death more unfamiliar still, that old experience would ever, from time to time, return to him; even in the living he sometimes caught its likeness; at any time or place, in a moment, the faint atmosphere of the chamber of death would be breathed around him, and the image with the bound chin, the quaint smile, the straight, stiff feet, shed itself across the air upon the bright carpet, amid the gayest company, or happiest communing with himself.

To most children the sombre questionings to which impressions like these attach themselves, if they come at all, are actually suggested by religious books, which therefore they often regard with much secret distaste, and dismiss, as far as possible, from their habitual thoughts as a too depressing element in life. To Florian such impressions, these misgivings as to the ultimate tendency of the years, of the relationship between life and death, had been suggested spontaneously in the natural course of his mental growth by a strong innate sense for the soberer tones in things, further strengthened by actual circumstances; and religious sentiment, that

system of biblical ideas in which he had been brought up, presented itself to him as a thing that might soften and dignify, and light up as with a "lively hope," a melancholy already deeply settled in him. So he yielded himself easily to religious impressions, and with a kind of mystical appetite for sacred things; the more as they came to him through a saintly person who loved him tenderly, and believed that this early pre-occupation with them already marked the child out for a saint. He began to love, for their own sakes, church lights, holy days, all that belonged to the comely order of the sanctuary, the secrets of its white linen, and holy vessels, and fonts of pure water; and its hieratic purity and simplicity became the type of something he desired always to have about him in actual life. He pored over the pictures in religious books, and knew by heart the exact mode in which the wrestling angel grasped Jacob, how Jacob looked in his mysterious sleep, how the bells and pomegranates were attached to the hem of Aaron's vestment, sounding sweetly as he glided over the turf of the holy place. His way of conceiving religion came then to be in effect what it ever afterwards remained—a sacred history indeed, but still more a sacred ideal, a transcendent version or representation, under intenser and more expressive light and shade, of human life and its familiar or exceptional incidents, birth, death, marriage,

youth, age, tears, joy, rest, sleep, waking—a mirror, towards which men might turn away their eyes from vanity and dullness, and see themselves therein as angels, with their daily meat and drink, even, become a kind of sacred transaction—a complementary strain or burden, applied to our every-day existence, whereby the stray snatches of music in it re-set themselves, and fall into the scheme of some higher and more consistent harmony. A place adumbrated itself in his thoughts, wherein those sacred personalities, which are at once the reflex and the pattern of our nobler phases of life, housed themselves; and this region in his intellectual scheme all subsequent experience did but tend still further to realise and define. Some ideal, hieratic persons he would always need to occupy it and keep a warmth there. And he could hardly understand those who felt no such need at all, finding themselves quite happy without such heavenly companionship, and sacred double of their life, beside them.

Thus a constant substitution of the typical for the actual took place in his thoughts. Angels might be met by the way, under English elm or beech-tree; mere messengers seemed like angels, bound on celestial errands; a deep mysticity brooded over real meetings and partings; marriages were made in heaven; and deaths also, with hands of angels thereupon, to bear soul and body quietly asunder, each to its

appointed rest. All the acts and accidents of daily life borrowed a sacred colour and significance; the very colours of things became themselves weighty with meanings like the sacred stuffs of Moses' tabernacle, full of penitence or peace. Sentiment, congruous in the first instance only with those divine transactions, the deep, effusive unction of the House of Bethany, was assumed as the due attitude for the reception of our every-day existence; and for a time he walked through the world in a sustained, not unpleasurable awe, generated by the habitual recognition, beside every circumstance and event of life, of its celestial correspondent.

Sensibility—the desire of physical beauty—a strange biblical awe, which made any reference to the unseen act on him like solemn music—these qualities the child took away with him, when, at about the age of twelve years, he left the old house, and was taken to live in another place. He had never left home before, and, anticipating much from this change, had long dreamed over it, jealously counting the days till the time fixed for departure should come; had been a little careless about others even, in his strong desire for it—when Lewis fell sick, for instance, and they must wait still two days longer. At last the morning came, very fine; and all things—the very pavement with its dust, at the roadside—seemed to have a white, pearl-like lustre in them. They were to travel by a

favourite road on which he had often walked a certain distance, and on one of those two prisoner days, when Lewis was sick, had walked farther than ever before, in his great desire to reach the new place. They had started and gone a little way when a pet bird was found to have been left behind, and must even now—so it presented itself to him—have already all the appealing fierceness and wild self-pity at heart of one left by others to perish of hunger in a closed house; and he returned to fetch it, himself in hardly less stormy distress. But as he passed in search of it from room to room, lying so pale, with a look of meekness in their denudation, and at last through that little, stripped white room, the aspect of the place touched him like the face of one dead; and a clinging back towards it came over him, so intense that he knew it would last long, and spoiling all his pleasure in the realisation of a thing so eagerly anticipated. And so, with the bird found, but himself in an agony of home-sickness, thus capriciously sprung up within him, he was driven quickly away, far into the rural distance, so fondly speculated on, of that favourite country-road.

EMERALD UTHWART[1]

We smile at epitaphs—at those recent enough to be read easily; smile, for the most part, at what for the most part is an unreal and often vulgar branch of literature; yet a wide one, with its flowers here or there, such as make us regret now and again not to have gathered more carefully in our wanderings a fair average of the like. Their very simplicity, of course, may set one's thoughts in motion to fill up the scanty tale, and those of the young at least are almost always worth while. At Siena, for instance, in the great Dominican church, even with the impassioned work of Sodoma at hand, you may linger in a certain dimly lit chapel to spell out the black-letter memorials of the German students who died here—*ætatis flore!*—at the University, famous early in the last century; young nobles chiefly, far from the Rhine, from Nuremberg, or Leipsic. Note one in particular! Loving parents and elder brother meant to record

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carefully the very days of the lad's poor life—*annos*, *menses*, *dies*; sent the order, doubtless, from the distant old castle in the Fatherland, but not quite explicitly; the spaces for the numbers remain still unfilled; and they never came to see. After two centuries the omission is not to be rectified; and the young man's memorial has perhaps its propriety as it stands, with those unnumbered, or numberless, days. "Full of affections," observed, once upon a time, a great lover of boys and young men, speaking to a large company of them :—"full of affections, full of powers, full of occupation, how naturally might the younger part of us especially (more naturally than the older) receive the tidings that there are things to be loved and things to be done which shall never pass away. We feel strong, we feel active, we feel full of life; and these feelings do not altogether deceive us, for we shall live for ever. We see a long prospect before us, for which it is worth while to work, even with much labour; for we are as yet young, and the past portion of our lives is but small in comparison of that which probably remains to us. It is most true! The past years of our life are absolutely beyond proportion small in comparison with those which certainly remain to us."

In a very different neighbourhood, here at home, in a remote Sussex churchyard, you may read that Emerald Uthwart was born on such a

day, "at Chase Lodge, in this parish; and died there," on a day in the year 18—, aged twenty-six. Think, thereupon, of the years of a very English existence passed without a lost week in that bloomy English place, amid its English lawns and flower-beds, its oldish brick and raftered plaster; you may see it still, not far off, on a clearing of the wooded hill-side sloping gradually to the sea. But you think wrong. Emerald Uthwart, in almost unbroken absence from his home, longed greatly for it, but left it early and came back there only to die, in disgrace, as he conceived; of which it was he died there, finding the sense of the place all around him at last, like blessed oil in one's wounds.

How they shook their musk from them!—those gardens, among which the youngest son, but not the youngest child, grew up, little considered till he returned there in those last years. The rippling note of the birds he distinguished so acutely seemed a part of this tree-less place, open freely to sun and air, such as rose and carnation loved, in the midst of the old disafforested chase. Brothers and sisters, all alike were gardeners, methodically intimate with their flowers. You need words compact rather of perfume than of colour to describe them, in nice annual order; terms for perfume, as immediate and definite as red, purple, and yellow. Flowers there were which seemed to yield their sweetest in the faint sea-salt, when the loosening wind

was strong from the south-west; some which found their way slowly towards the neighbourhood of the old oaks and beech-trees. Others consorted most freely with the wall-fruit, or seemed made for *pot-pourri* to sweeten the old black mahogany furniture. The sweet-pea stacks loved the broad path through the kitchen garden; the old-fashioned garden azalea was the making of a nosegay, with its honey which clung to one's finger. There were flowers all the sweeter for a battle with the rain; a flower like aromatic medicine; another like summer lingering into winter; it ripened as fruit does; and another was like August, his own birthday time, dropped into March.

The very mould here, rich old black gardener's earth, was flower-seed; and beyond, the fields, one after another, through the white gates breaking the well-grown hedge-rows, were hardly less garden-like; little velvety fields, little with the true sweet English littleness of our little island, our land of vignettes. Here all was little; the very church where they went to pray, to sit, the ancient Uthwarts sleeping all around outside under the windows, deposited there as quietly as fallen trees on their native soil, and almost unrecorded, as there had been almost nothing to record; where however, Sunday after Sunday, Emerald Uthwart reads, wondering, the solitary memorial of one soldierly member of his race, who had,—well! who had *not* died here

at home, in his bed. How wretched! how fine! how inconceivably great and difficult!—not for him! And yet, amid all its littleness, how large his sense of liberty in the place he, the cadet doomed to leave it—his birth-place, where he is also so early to die—had loved better than any one of them! Enjoying hitherto all the freedom of the almost grown-up brothers, the unrepressed noise, the unchecked hours, the old rooms, all their own way, he is literally without the consciousness of rule. Only, when the long irresponsible day is over, amid the dew, the odours, of summer twilight, they roll their cricket-field against to-morrow's game. So it had always been with the Uthwarts; they never went to school. In the great attic he has chosen for himself Emerald awakes;—it was a rule, sanitary, almost medical, never to rouse the children—rises to play betimes; or, if he choose, with window flung open to the roses, the sea, turns to sleep again, deliberately, deliciously, under the fine old blankets.

A rather sensuous boy! you may suppose, amid the wholesome, natural self-indulgence of a very English home. His days began there: it closed again, after an interval of the larger number of them, indulgently, mercifully, round his end. For awhile he became its centre, old habits changing, the old furniture rearranged about him, for the first time in many generations, though he left it now with something like

resentment in his heart, as if thrust harshly away, sent *ablactatus a matre;* made an effort thereon to snap the last thread which bound him to it. Yet it would come back upon him sometimes, amid so different a scene, as through a suddenly opened door, or a rent in the wall, with softer thoughts of his people,—there, or *not* there,—and a sudden, dutiful effort on his part to rekindle wasting affection.

The youngest of four sons, but not the youngest of the family!—you conceive the sort of negligence that creeps over even the kindest maternities, in such case; unless, perhaps, sickness, or the sort of misfortune, making the last first for the affectionate, that brought Emerald back at length to die contentedly, interferes with the way of nature. Little by little he comes to understand that, while the brothers are indulged with lessons at home, are some of them free even of these and placed already in the world, where, however, there remains no place for him, he is to go to school, chiefly for the convenience of others—they are going to be much away from home!—that now for the first time, as he says to himself, an old-English Uthwart is to pass under the yoke. The tutor in the house, meantime, aware of some fascination in the lad, teaches him, at his own irregularly chosen hours, more carefully than the others; exerts all his gifts for the purpose, winning him on almost insensibly to youthful proficiency in those difficult rudiments.

See him as he stands, seemingly rooted in the spot where he has come to flower! He departs, however, a few days before the departure of the rest—some to foreign parts, the brothers, who shut up the old place, to town. For a moment, he makes an effort to figure to himself those coming absences as but exceptional intervals in his life here; he will count the days, going more quickly so; find his pleasure in watching the sands fall, as even the sands of time at school must. In fact, he was scarcely ever to lie at ease here again, till he came to take his final leave of it, lying at his length so. In brief holidays he rejoins his people, anywhere, anyhow, in a sort of hurry and makeshift:—*Flos Parietis!* thus carelessly plucked forth. Emerald Uthwart was born on such a day "at Chase Lodge, in this parish, and died there."

See him then as he stands! counting now the hours that remain, on the eve of that first emigration, and look away next at the other place, which through centuries has been forming to receive him; from those garden-beds, now at their richest, but where all is so winsomely little, to that place of "great matters," great stones, great memories out of reach. Why! the Uthwarts had scarcely had more memories than their woods, noiselessly deciduous; or their prehistoric, entirely unprogressive, unrecording forefathers, in or before the days of the Druids. Centuries of almost "still" life—of birth, death,

and the rest, as merely natural processes—had made them and their home what we find them. Centuries of conscious endeavour, on the other hand, had builded, shaped, and coloured the place, a small cell, which Emerald Uthwart was now to occupy; a place such as our most characteristic English education has rightly tended to "find itself a house" in—a place full, for those who came within its influence, of a will of its own. Here everything, one's very games, have gone by rule onwards from the dim old monastic days, and the Benedictine school for novices with the wholesome severities which have descended to our own time. Like its customs,—there's a book in the cathedral archives with the names, for centuries past, of the "scholars" who have missed church at the proper times for going there—like its customs, well-worn yet well-preserved, time-stained, time-engrained, time-mellowed, the venerable Norman or English stones of this austere, beautifully proportioned place look like marble, to which Emerald's softly nurtured being, his careless wild-growth must now adapt itself, though somewhat painfully recoiling from contact with what seems so hard also, and bright, and cold. From his native world of soft garden touches, carnation and rose (they had been everywhere in those last weeks), where every one did just what he liked, he was passed now to this world of grey stone; and here it was always the decisive word

of command. That old warrior Uthwart's record in the church at home, so fine, yet so wretched, so unspeakably great and difficult! seemed written here everywhere around him, as he stood feeling himself fit only to be taught, to be drilled into, his small compartment; in every movement of his companions, with their quaint confining little cloth gowns; in the keen, clear, well-authorised dominancy of some, the instant submission of others. In fact, by one of our wise English compromises, we still teach our so modern boys the Classics; a lesson in attention and patience, at the least. Nay! by a double compromise, with delightful physiognomic results sometimes, we teach them their pagan Latin and Greek under the shadow of medieval church-towers, amid the haunts, the traditions, and with something of the discipline, of monasticism; for which, as is noticeable, the English have never wholly lost an early inclination. The French and others have swept their scholastic houses empty of it, with pedantic fidelity to their theories. English pedants may succeed in doing the like. But the result of our older method has had its value so far, at least, say! for the careful æsthetic observer. It is of such diagonal influences, through complication of influence, that expression comes, in life, in our culture, in the very faces of men and boys—of these boys. Nothing could better harmonise present with past than the sight of them just here, as they

shout at their games, or recite their lessons, overarched by the work of medieval priors, or pass to church meekly, into the seats occupied by the young monks before them.

If summer comes reluctantly to our English shores, it is also apt to linger with us ;—its *flora* of red and gold leaves on the branches wellnigh to Christmas ; the hot days that surprise you, and persist, though heralded by white mornings, hinting that it is but the year's indulgence so to deal with us. To the fanciful, such days may seem most at home in the places where England has thus preferred to locate the somewhat pensive education of its more favoured youth. As Uthwart passes through the old ecclesiastical city, upon which any more modern touch, modern door or window, seems a thing out of place through negligence, the diluted sunlight itself seems driven along with a sparing trace of gilded vane or red tile in it, under the wholesome active wind from the East coast. The long, finely weathered, leaden roof, and the great square tower, gravely magnificent, emphatic from the first view of it over the grey down above the hop-gardens, the gently-watered meadows, dwarf now everything beside ; have the bigness of nature's work, seated up there so steadily amid the winds, as rain and fog and heat pass by. More and more persistently, as he proceeds, in the "Green Court" at last, they occupy the outlook. He is shown the narrow

cubicle in which he is to sleep; and there it still is, with nothing else, in the window-pane, as he lies;—"our tower," the "Angel Steeple," noblest of its kind. Here, from morning to night, everything seems challenged to follow the upward lead of its long, bold, "perpendicular" lines. The very place one is in, its stone-work, its empty spaces, invade you; invade all who belong to them, as Uthwart belongs, yielding wholly from the first; seem to question you masterfully as to your purpose in being here at all, amid the great memories of the past, of this school;—challenge you, so to speak, to make moral philosophy one of your acquirements, if you can, and to systematise your vagrant self; which however will in any case be here systematised for you. In Uthwart, then, is the plain tablet, for the influences of place to inscribe. Say if you will, that he is under the power of an "embodied ideal," somewhat repellent, but which he cannot despise. He sits in the schoolroom—ancient, transformed chapel of the pilgrims; sits in the sober white and brown place, at the heavy old desks, carved this way and that, crowded as an old churchyard with forgotten names, side by side with sympathetic or antipathetic competitors, as it may chance. In a delightful, exactly measured, quarter of an hour's rest, they come about him, seem to wish to be friends at once, good and bad alike, dull and clever; wonder a little at the name, and

the owner. A family name—he explains, good-humouredly; tries to tell some story no one could ever remember precisely of the ancestor from whom it came, the one story of the Uthwarts; is spared; nay! petulantly forbidden to proceed. But the name sticks the faster. Nicknames mark, for the most part, popularity. *Emerald!* so every one called Uthwart, but shortened to *Aldy*. They disperse; flock out into the court; acquaint him hastily with the curiosities of the Precincts, the "dark entry," the rich heraldries of the blackened and mouldering cloister, the ruined overgrown spaces where the old monastery stood, the stones of which furnished material for the rambling prebends' houses, now "antediluvian" in their turn; are ready also to climb the scaffold-poles always to be found somewhere about the great church, or dive along the odd, secret passages of the old builders, with quite learned explanations (being proud of, and therefore painstaking about, the place) of architectural periods, of Gothic "late" and "early," layer upon layer, down to round-arched "Norman," like the famous staircase of their school.

The reader comprehends that Uthwart was come where the *genius loci* was a strong one, with a claim to mould all who enter it to a perfect, uninquiring, willing or unwilling, conformity to itself. On Saturday half-holidays the scholars are taken to church in their surplices, across the

court, under the lime-trees; emerge at last up the dark winding passages into the melodious, mellow-lighted space, always three days behind the temperature outside, so thick are the walls;—how warm and nice! how cool and nice! The choir, to which they glide in order to their places below the clergy, seems conspicuously cold and sad. But the empty chapels lying beyond it all about into the distance are a trap on sunny mornings for the clouds of yellow effulgence. The Angel Steeple is a lantern within, and sheds down a flood of the like just beyond the gates. You can peep up into it where you sit, if you dare to gaze about you. If at home there had been nothing great, here, to boyish sense, one seems diminished to nothing at all, amid the grand waves, wave upon wave, of patiently-wrought stone; the daring height, the daring severity, of the innumerable, long, upward, ruled lines, rigidly bent just at last, in due place, into the reserved grace of the perfect Gothic arch; the peculiar daylight which seemed to come from further than the light outside. Next morning they are here again. In contrast to those irregularly broken hours at home, the passive length of things impresses Uthwart now. It develops patience—that tale of hours, the long chanted English service; our English manner of education is a development of patience, of decorous and mannerly patience. "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in

his youth : he putteth his mouth in the dust, he keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him."—They have this for an anthem ; sung however to wonderfully cheerful and sprightly music, as if one liked the thought.

The aim of a veritable community, says Plato, is not that this or that member of it should be disproportionately at ease, but that the whole should flourish ; though indeed such general welfare might come round again to the loyal unit therein, and rest with him, as a privilege of his individual being after all. The social type he preferred, as we know, was conservative Sparta and its youth ; whose unsparing discipline had doubtless something to do with the fact that it was the handsomest and best-formed in all Greece. A school is not made for one. It would misrepresent Uthwart's wholly unconscious humility to say that he felt the beauty of the ἄσκησις (we need that Greek word) to which he not merely finds himself subject, but as under a fascination submissively yields himself, although another might have been aware of the charm of it, half ethic, half physical, as visibly effective in him. Its peculiarity would have lain in the expression of a stress upon him and his customary daily existence, beyond what any definitely proposed issue of it, at least for the moment, explained. Something of that is involved in the very idea of a classical education, at least for such as he ; in its seeming indirect-

ness or lack of purpose, amid so much difficulty, as contrasted with forms of education more obviously useful or practical. He found himself in a system of fixed rules, amid which, it might be, some of his own tendencies and inclinations would die out of him through disuse. The confident word of command, the instantaneous obedience expected, the enforced silence, the very games that go by rule, a sort of hardness natural to wholesome English youths when they come together, but here *de rigueur* as a point of good manners;—he accepts all these without hesitation; the early hours also, naturally distasteful to him, which gave to actual morning, to all that had passed in it, when in more self-conscious mood he looked back on the morning of life, a preponderance, a disproportionate place there, adding greatly to the effect of its dreamy distance from him at this later time;—an *ideal* quality, he might have said, had he ever used such words as that.

Uthwart duly passes his examination; and, in their own chapel in the transept of the choir, lighted up late for evening prayer after the long day of trial, is received to the full privileges of a Scholar with the accustomed Latin words:—*Introitum tuum et exitum tuum custodiat Dominus!* He takes them, not to heart, but rather to mind, as few, if they so much as heard them, were wont to do; ponders them for a while. They seem scarcely meant for him—words like those!

increase however his sense of responsibility to the place, of which he is now more exclusively than before a part—that he belongs to it, its great memories, great dim purposes; deepen the consciousness he had on first coming hither of a demand in the world about him, whereof the very stones are emphatic, to which no average human creature could be sufficient; of reproof, reproaches, of this or that in himself.

It was reported, there was a funny belief, at school, that Aldy Uthwart had no feeling and was incapable of tears. They never came to him certainly, when, at nights for the most part, the very touch of home, so soft, yet so indifferent to him, reached him, with a sudden opulent rush of garden perfumes; came at the rattling of the window-pane in the wind, with anything that expressed distance from the bare white walls around him here. He thrust it from him brusquely, being of a practical turn, and, though somewhat sensuous, wholly without sentimentality. There is something however in the lad's soldier-like, impassible self-command, in his sustained expression of a certain indifference to things, which awakes suddenly all the sentiment, the poetry, latent hitherto in another—James Stokes, the prefect, his immediate superior; awakes for the first time into ample flower something of genius in a seemingly plodding scholar, and therewith also something of the waywardness popularly thought to belong to

genius. *Preceptores, condiscipuli*, alike, marvel at a sort of delicacy coming into the habits, the person, of that tall, bashful, broad-shouldered, very Kentish, lad; so unaffectedly nevertheless, that it is understood after all to be but the smartness properly significant of change to early manhood, like the down on his lip. Wistful anticipations of manhood are in fact aroused in him, thoughts of the future; his ambition takes effective outline. The well-worn, perhaps conventional, beauties of their "dead" Greek and Latin books, associated directly now with the living companion beside him, really shine for him at last with their pristine freshness; seem more than to fulfil their claim upon the patience, the attention, of modern youth. He notices as never before minute points of meaning in Homer, in Virgil; points out thus, for instance, to his junior, one day in the sunshine, how the Greeks had a special word for the Fate which accompanied one who would come to a violent end. The common Destinies of men, Μοῖραι, *Mæræ*—they accompanied all men indifferently. But Κήρ, the extraordinary Destiny, one's Doom, had a scent for distant blood-shedding; and, to be in at a sanguinary death, one of their number came forth to the very cradle, followed persistently all the way, over the waves, through powder and shot, through the rose-gardens;—where not? Looking back, one might trace the red footsteps all along, side by

side. (Emerald Uthwart, you remember, was to "die there," of lingering sickness, in disgrace, as he fancied, while the word glory came to be softly whispered of them and of their end.) Classic felicities, the choice expressions, with which James Stokes has so patiently stored his memory, furnish now a dainty embroidery upon every act, every change in time or place, of their daily life in common. He finds the Greek or the Latin model of their antique friendship or tries to find it, in the books they read together. None fits exactly. It is of military glory they are really thinking, amid those ecclesiastical surroundings, where however surplices and uniforms are often mingled together; how they will lie, in costly glory, costly to them, side by side, (as they work and walk and play now, side by side) in the cathedral aisle, with a tattered flag perhaps above them, and under a single epitaph, like that of those two older scholars, Ensigns, *Signiferi*, in their respective regiments, *in hac ecclesiâ pueri instituti*, with the sapphic stanza in imitation of the Horace they had learned here, written by their old master.

Horace!—he was, had been always, the idol of their school; to know him by heart, to translate him into effective English idiom, have an apt phrase of his instinctively on one's lips for every occasion. That boys should be made to spout him under penalties, would have seemed doubtless to that sensitive, vain, winsome poet,

even more than to grim Juvenal, quite the sorriest of fates; might have seemed not so bad however, could he, from the "ashes" so persistently in his thoughts, have peeped on these English boys, row upon row, with black or golden heads, repeating him in the fresh morning, and observed how well for once the thing was done; how well he was understood by English James Stokes, feeling the old "fire" really "quick" still, under the influence which now in truth quickened, enlivened, everything around him. The old heathen's way of looking at things, his melodious expression of it, blends, or contrasts itself oddly with the everyday detail, with the very stones, the Gothic stones, of a world he could hardly have conceived, its medieval surroundings, their half-clerical life here. Yet not so inconsistently after all! The builders of these aisles and cloisters had known and valued as much of him as they could come by in their own un-instructed time; had built up their intellectual edifice more than they were aware of from fragments of pagan thought, as, quite consciously, they constructed their churches of old Roman bricks and pillars, or frank imitations of them. One's day, then, began with him, for all alike, Sundays of course excepted,—with an Ode, learned over-night by the prudent, who, observing how readily the words which send us to sleep cling to the brain and seem an inherent part of it next morning, kept him under

their pillows. Prefects, without a book, heard the repetition of the Juniors, must be able to correct their blunders. Odes and Epodes, thus acquired, were a score of days and weeks; alcaic and sapphic verses like a bead-roll for counting off the time that intervened before the holidays. Time—that tardy servant of youthful appetite—brought them soon enough to the point where they desired in vain "to see one of" those days, erased now so willingly; and sentimental James Stokes has already a sense that this "pause 'twixt cup and lip" of life is really worth pausing over, worth deliberation:—all this poetry, yes! poetry, surely, of their alternate work and play; light and shade, call it! Had it been, after all, a life in itself less commonplace than theirs—that life, the trivial details of which their Horace had touched so daintily, gilded with real gold words?

Regular, submissive, dutiful to play also, Aldy meantime enjoys his triumphs in the Green Court; loves best however to run a paper-chase afar over the marshes, till you come in sight, or within scent, of the sea, in the autumn twilight; and his dutifulness to games at least had its full reward. A wonderful hit of his at cricket was long remembered; right over the lime-trees on to the cathedral roof, was it? or over the roof, and onward into space, circling there independently, minutely, as *Sidus Cantiorum?* A comic poem on it in Latin, and a pretty one in English,

were penned by James Stokes, still not so serious but that he forgets time altogether one day, in a manner the converse of exemplary in a prefect, whereupon Uthwart, his companion as usual, manages to take all the blame, and the due penalty next morning. Stokes accepted the sacrifice the more readily, believing—he too—that Aldy was "incapable of pain." What surprised those who were in the secret was that, when it was over, he rose, and facing the headmaster—could it be insolence? or was it the sense of untruthfulness in his friendly action, or sense of the universal peccancy of all boys and men?—said submissively: "And now, sir, that I have taken my punishment, I hope you will forgive my fault."

Submissiveness!—It had the force of genius with Emerald Uthwart. In that very matter he had but yielded to a senior against his own inclination. What he felt in Horace was the sense, original, active, personal, of "things too high for *me!*", the sense, not really unpleasing to him, of an unattainable height here too, in this royal felicity of utterance, this literary art, the minute cares of which had been really designed for the minute carefulness of a disciple such as this—all attention. Well! the sense of authority, of a large intellectual authority over us, impressed anew day after day, of some impenetrable glory round "the masters of those who know," is, of course, one of the effects we

look for from a classical education :—that, and a full estimate of the preponderating value of the manner of the doing of it in the thing done; which again, for ingenuous youth, is an encouragement of good manners on its part :—"I behave myself orderly." Just at those points, scholarship attains something of a religious colour. And in that place, religion, religious system, its claim to overpower one, presented itself in a way of which even the least serious by nature could not be unaware. Their great church, its customs and traditions, formed an element in that *esprit de corps* into which the boyish mind throws itself so readily. Afterwards, in very different scenes, the sentiment of that place would come back upon him, as if resentfully, by contrast with the conscious or unconscious profanities of others, crushed out about him straightway, by the shadow of awe, the minatory flash, felt around his unopened lips, in the glance, the changed manner. Not to be "occupied with great matters" recommends in heavenly places, as we know, the souls of some. Yet there were a few to whom it seemed unfortunate that religion whose flag Uthwart would have borne in hands so pure, touched him from first to last, and till his eyes were finally closed on this world, only, again, as a thing immeasurable, surely not meant for the like of him; its high claims, to which no one could be equal; its reproaches. He would scarcely have proposed to "enter into"

such matters; was constitutionally shy of them. His submissiveness, you see, *was* a kind of genius; made him therefore, of course, unlike those around him; was a secret; a thing, you might say, "which no one knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

Thus repressible, self-restrained, always concurring with the influence, the claim upon him, the rebuke, of others, in the bustle of school life he did not count even with those who knew him best, with those who taught him, for the intellectual capacity he really had. In every generation of schoolboys there are a few who find out, almost for themselves, the beauty and power of good literature, even in the literature they must read perforce; and this, in turn, is but the handsel of a beauty and power still active in the actual world, should they have the good fortune, or rather, acquire the skill, to deal with it properly. It has something of the stir and unction—this intellectual awaking with a leap—of the coming of love. So it was with Uthwart about his seventeenth year. He felt it, felt the intellectual passion, like the pressure outward of wings within him—ἡ πτεροῦ δύναμις, says Plato, in the *Phædrus;* but again, as some do with everyday love, withheld, restrained himself; the status of a freeman in the world of intellect can hardly be for him. The sense of intellectual ambition, ambitious thoughts such as sweeten the toil of some of those about him,

coming to him once in a way, he is frankly recommended to put them aside, and acquiesces; puts them from him once for all, as he could do with besetting thoughts and feelings, his preferences, (as he had put aside soft thoughts of home as a disobedience to rule) and with a countenance more good-humoured than ever, an absolute placidity. It is fit he should be treated sparingly in this matter of intellectual enjoyment. He is made to understand that there is at least a score of others as good scholars as he. He will have of course all the pains, but must not expect the prizes, of his work; of his loyal, incessant, cheerful industry.

But only see him as he goes. It is as if he left music, delightfully throbbing music, or flowers, behind him, as he passes, careless of them, unconsciously, through the world, the school, the precincts, the old city. Strangers' eyes, resting on him by chance, are deterred for a while, even among the rich sights of the venerable place, as he walks out and in, in his prim gown and purple-tasselled cap; goes in, with the stream of sunlight, through the black shadows of the mouldering Gothic gateway, like youth's very self, eternal, immemorial, eternally renewed, about those immemorially ancient stones. "Young Apollo!" people say —people who have pigeon-holes for their impressions, watching the slim, trim figure with the exercise books. His very dress seems touched

with Hellenic fitness to the healthy youthful form. "Golden-haired, scholar Apollo!" they repeat, foolishly, ignorantly. He was better; was more like a real portrait of a real young Greek, like *Tryphon, Son of Eutychos*, for instance, (as friends remembered him with regret, as you may see him still on his tombstone in the British Museum) alive among the paler physical and intellectual lights of modern England, under the old monastic stonework of the Middle Age. That theatrical old Greek god never took the expressiveness, the lines of delicate meaning, such as were come into the face of the English lad, the physiognomy of his race; ennobled now, as if by the writing, the signature, there, of a grave intelligence, by grave information and a subdued will, though without a touch of melancholy in this "best of playfellows." A musical composer's notes, we know, are not themselves till the fit executant comes, who can put all they may be into them. The somewhat unmeaningly handsome facial type of the Uthwarts, moulded to a mere animal or physical perfection through wholesome centuries, is breathed on now, informed, by the touches, traces, complex influences from past and present a thousandfold, crossing each other in this late century, and yet at unity in the simple law of the system to which he is now subject. Coming thus upon an otherwise vigorous and healthy nature, an untainted

physique, and limited by it, those combining mental influences leave the firm unconscious simplicity of the boyish nature still unperplexed. The sisters, their friends, when he comes rarely upon them in foreign places, are proud of the schoolboy's company—to walk at his side; the brothers, when he sees them for a day, more considerate than of old. Everywhere he leaves behind him an odd regret for his presence, as he in turn wonders sometimes at the deference paid to one so unimportant as himself by those he meets by accident perhaps; at the ease, for example, with which he attains to the social privileges denied to others.

They tell him, he knows it already, he would "do for the army." "Yes! that would suit you," people observe at once, when he tells them what "he is to be"—undoubtedly suit him, that dainty, military, very English kind of pride, in seeming precisely what one is, neither more nor less. And the first mention of Uthwart's purpose defines also the vague outlooks of James Stokes, who will be a soldier too. Uniforms, their scarlet and white and blue, spruce leather and steel, and gold lace, enlivening the old oak stalls at service time—uniforms and surplices were always close together here, where a military garrison had been established in the suburbs for centuries past, and there were always sons of its officers in the school. If you stole out of an evening, it was like a stage scene—

nay! like the Middle Age, itself, with this multitude of soldiers mingling in the crowd which filled the unchanged, gabled streets. A military tradition had been continuous, from the days of crusading knights who lay humbly on their backs in the "Warriors' Chapel" to the time of the civil wars, when a certain heroic youth of eighteen was brought to rest there, onward to Dutch and American wars, and to Harry, and Geoffrey, and another James also, *in hac ecclesiâ pueri instituti.* It was not so long since one of them sat on those very benches in the sixth form; had come back and entered the school, in full uniform, to say good-bye! Then the "colours" of his regiment had been brought, to be deposited by Dean and Canons in the cathedral; and a few weeks later they had passed, scholars and the rest in long procession, to deposit Ensign —— himself there under his flag, or what remained of it, a sorry, tattered fringe, along the staff he had borne out of the battle at the cost of his life, as a little tablet explained. There were others in similar terms. Alas! for that extraordinary, peculiarly-named, Destiny, or Doom, appointed to walk side by side with one or another, aware from the first, but never warning him, till the random or well-considered shot comes.

Meantime however, the University, with work in preparation thereto, fills up the thoughts, the hours, of these would-be soldiers, of James

Stokes, and therefore of Emerald Uthwart, through the long summer-time, till the Green Court is fragrant with lime-blossom, and speech-day comes, on which, after their flower-service and sermon from an old comrade, Emerald surprises masters and companions by the fine quality of a recitation; still more when "Scholar Stokes" and he are found bracketed together as "Victors" of the school, who will proceed together to Oxford. His speech in the Chapter-house was from that place in Homer, where the soul of the lad Elpenor, killed by accident, entreats Ulysses for due burial rites. "Fix my oar over my grave," he says, "the oar I rowed with when I lived, when I went with my companions." And in effect what surprised, charmed the hearers was the scruple with which those naturally graceful lips dealt with every word, every syllable, put upon them. He seemed to be thinking only of his author, except for just so much of self-consciousness as was involved in the fact that he seemed also to be speaking a little against his will; like a monk, it might be said, who sings in choir with a really fine voice, but at the bidding of his superior, and counting the notes all the while till his task be done, because his whole nature revolts from so much as the bare opportunity for personal display. It was his duty to speak on the occasion. They had always been great in speech-making, in theatricals, from before

the days when the Puritans destroyed the Dean's "Great Hall" because "the King's Scholars had profaned it by acting plays there"; and that peculiar note or accent, as being conspicuously free from the egotism which vulgarises most of us, seemed to befit the person of Emerald, impressing weary listeners pleasantly as a novelty in that kind. Singular!—The words, because seemingly forced from him, had been worth hearing. The cheers, the "Kentish Fire," of their companions might have broken down the crumbling black arches of the old cloister, or roused the dead under foot, as the "Victors" came out of the Chapter-house side by side; side by side also out of that delightful period of their life at school, to proceed in due course to the University.

They left it precipitately, after brief residence there, taking advantage of a sudden outbreak of war to join the army at once, regretted—James Stokes for his high academic promise, Uthwart for a quality, or group of qualities, not strictly to be defined. He seemed, in short, to harmonise by their combination in himself all the various qualities proper to a large and varied community of youths of nineteen or twenty, to which, when actually present there, he was felt from hour to hour to be indispensable. In fact school habits and standards had survived in a world not so different from that of school for those who are faithful to its type. When he looked back upon

it a little later, college seemed to him, seemed indeed at the time, had he ventured to admit it, a strange prolongation of boyhood, in its provisional character, the narrow limitation of its duties and responsibility, the very divisions of one's day, the routine of play and work, its formal, perhaps pedantic rules. The veritable plunge from youth into manhood came when one passed finally through those old Gothic gates, from a somewhat dreamy or problematic preparation for it, into the world of peremptory facts. A college, like a school, is not made for one; and as Uthwart sat there, still but a scholar, still reading with care the books prescribed for him by others—Greek and Latin books—the contrast between his own position and that of the majority of his coevals already at the business of life impressed itself sometimes with an odd sense of unreality in the place around him. Yet the schoolboy's sensitive awe for the great things of the intellectual world had but matured itself, and was at its height here amid this larger competition, which left him more than ever to find in doing his best submissively the sole reward of so doing. He needs now in fact less repression than encouragement not to be a "passman," as he may if he likes, acquiescing in a lowly measure of culture which certainly will not manufacture Miltons, nor turn serge into silk, broom-blossom into verbenas, but only, perhaps not so faultily, leave Emerald Uthwart and the like of him

essentially what they are. "He holds his book in a peculiar way," notes in manuscript one of his tutors; "holds on to it with both hands; clings as if from below, just as his tough little mind clings to the sense of the Greek words he can English so closely, precisely." Again, as at school, he had put his neck under the yoke; though he has now also much reading quite at his own choice; by preference, when he can come by such, about the place where he finds himself, about the earlier youthful occupants, if it might be, of his own quaint rooms on the second floor just below the roof; of what he can see from his windows in the old black front eastwards, with its inestimable *patina* of ancient smoke and weather and natural decay (when you look close the very stone is a composite of minute dead bodies) relieving heads like his so effectively on summer mornings. On summer nights the scent of the hay, the wild-flowers, comes across the narrow fringe of town to right and left; seems to come from beyond the Oxford meadows, with sensitive, half-repellent thoughts from the gardens at home. He looks down upon the green square with the slim, quaint, black, young figures that cross it on the way to chapel on yellow Sunday mornings, or upwards to the dome, the spire; can watch them closely in freakish moonlight, or flickering softly by an occasional bonfire in the quadrangle behind him. Yet how hard, how forbidding sometimes, under

a late stormy sky, the scheme of black, white, and grey, to which the group of ancient buildings could attune itself. And what he reads most readily is of the military life that intruded itself so oddly, during the Civil War, into these half-monastic places, till the timid old academic world scarcely knew itself. He treasures then every incident which connects a soldier's coat with any still recognisable object, wall, or tree, or garden-walk; that walk, for instance, under Merton garden where young Colonel Windebank was shot for a traitor. His body lies in Saint Mary Magdalen's churchyard. Unassociated to such incident, the mere beauties of the place counted at the moment for less than in retrospect. It was almost retrospect even now, with an anticipation of regret, in rare moments of solitude perhaps, when the oars splashed far up the narrow streamlets through the fields on May evenings among the fritillaries—does the reader know them? that strange remnant just here of a richer extinct flora—dry flowers, though with a drop of dubious honey in each. Snakes' heads, the rude call them, for their shape, scale-marked too, and in colour like rusted blood, as if they grew from some forgotten battle-field, the bodies, the rotten armour—yet delicate, beautiful, waving proudly. In truth the memory of Oxford made almost everything he saw after it seem vulgar. But he feels also nevertheless, characteristically, that such local pride (*fastus* he terms it) is proper

only for those whose occupations are wholly congruous with it; for the gifted, the freemen who can enter into the genius, who possess the liberty, of the place; that it has a reproach in it for the outsider, which comes home to him.

Here again then as he passes through the world, so delightfully to others, they tell him, as if weighing him, his very self, against his merely scholastic capacity and effects, that he would "do for the army"; which he is now wholly glad to hear, for from first to last, through all his successes there, the army had still been scholar Stokes' choice, and he had no difficulty, as the reader sees, in keeping Uthwart also faithful to first intentions. Their names were already entered for commissions; but the war breaking out afresh, information reaches them suddenly one morning that they may join their regiment forthwith. Bidding good-bye therefore, gladly, hastily, they set out with as little delay as possible for Flanders; and passing the old school by their nearest road thither, stay for an hour, find an excuse for coming into the hall in uniform, with which it must be confessed they seem thoroughly satisfied—Uthwart quite perversely at ease in the stiff make of his scarlet jacket with black facings—and so pass onward on their way to Dover, Dunkirk, they scarcely know whither finally, among the featureless villages, the long monotonous lines of the windmills, the poplars, blurred with cold fogs, but marking the

roads through the snow which covers the endless plain, till they come in sight at last of the army in motion, like machines moving—how little it looked on that endless plain!—pass on their rapid way to fame, to unpurchased promotion, as a matter of course to responsibility also, till, their fortune turning upon them, they miscarry in the latter fatally. They joined in fact a distinguished regiment in a gallant army, immediately after a victory in those Flemish regions; shared its encouragement as fully as if they had had a share in its perils; the high character of the young officers consolidating itself easily, pleasantly for them, till the hour of an act of thoughtless bravery, almost the sole irregular or undisciplined act of Uthwart's life, he still following his senior—criminal however to the military conscience, under the actual circumstances, and in an enemy's country. The faulty thing was done, certainly, with a scrupulous, a characteristic completeness on their part; and with their prize actually in hand, an old weather-beaten flag such as hung in the cathedral aisle at school, they bethought them for the first time of its price, with misgivings now in rapid growth, as they return to their posts as nearly as may be, for the division has been ordered forward in their brief absence, to find themselves under arrest, with that damning proof of heroism, of guilt, in their possession, relinquished however along with the swords they will never handle

again—toys, idolised toys of our later youth, we weep at the thought of them as never to be handled again!—as they enter the prison to await summary trial next day on the charge of wantonly deserting their posts while in position of high trust in time of war.

The full details of what had happened could have been told only by one or other of themselves; by Uthwart best, in the somewhat matter-of-fact and prosaic journal he had managed to keep from the first, noting there the incidents of each successive day, as if in anticipation of its possible service by way of *pièce justificative*, should such become necessary, attesting hour by hour their single-hearted devotion to soldierly duty. Had a draughtsman equally truthful or equally "realistic," as we say, accompanied them and made a like use of his pencil, he might have been mistaken at home for an artist aiming at "effect," by skilful "arrangements" to tickle people's interest in the spectacle of war—the sudden ruin of a village street, the heap of bleeding horses in the half-ploughed field, the gaping bridges, hand or face of the dead peeping from a hastily made grave at the roadside, smoke-stained rents in cottage-walls, ignoble ruin everywhere—ignoble but for its frank expression.

But you find in Uthwart's journal, side by side with those ugly patches, very precise and unadorned records of their common gallantry, the more effective indeed for their simplicity;

and not of gallantry only, but of the long-sustained patience also, the essential monotony of military life, even on a campaign. Peril, good-luck, promotion, the grotesque hardships which leave them smart as ever, (as if, so others observe, dust and mire wouldn't hold on them, so "spick and span" they were, more especially on days of any exceptional risk or effort) the great confidence reposed in them at last; all is noted, till, with a little quiet pride, he records a gun-shot wound which keeps him a month alone in hospital wearily; and at last, its hasty but seemingly complete healing.

Following, leading, resting sometimes perforce, amid gun-shots, putrefying wounds, green corpses, they never lacked good spirits, any more than the birds warbling perennially afresh, as they will, over such gangrened places, or the grass which so soon covers them. And at length fortune, their misfortune, perversely determined that heroism should take the form of patience under the walls of an unimportant frontier town, with old Vauban fortifications seemingly made only for appearance' sake, like the work in the trenches—gardener's work! round about the walls they are called upon to superintend day after day. It was like a calm at sea, delaying one's passage, one's purpose in being on board at all, a dead calm, yet with an awful feeling of tension, intolerable at last for those who were still all athirst for action. How dumb and

stupid the place seemed, in its useless defiance of conquerors, anxious, for reasons not indeed apparent, but which they were undoubtedly within their rights in holding to, not to blow it at once into the air—the steeple, the perky weathercock — to James Stokes in particular, always eloquent in action, longing for heroic effort, and ready to pay its price, maddened now by the palpable imposture in front of him morning after morning, as he demonstrates conclusively to Uthwart, seduced at last from the clearer sense of duty and discipline, not by the demonstrated ease, but rather by the apparent difficulty of what Stokes proposes to do. They might have been deterred by recent example. Colonel ——, who, as every one knew, had actually gained a victory by disobeying orders, had not been suffered to remain in the army of which he was an ornament. It was easy in fact for both, though it seemed the heroic thing, to dash through the calm with delightful sense of active powers renewed; to pass into the beleaguered town with a handful of men, and no loss, after a manner the feasibility of which Stokes had explained acutely but in vain at headquarters. He proved it to Uthwart at all events, and a few others. Delightful heroism! delightful self-indulgence! It was delayed for a moment by orders to move forward at last, with hopes checked almost immediately after by a countermand, bringing them right round their

stupid dumb enemy to the same wearisome position once again, to the trenches and the rest, but with their thirst for action only stimulated the more. How great the disappointment! encouraging a certain laxity of discipline that had prevailed about them of late. They take advantage however of a vague phrase in their instructions; determine in haste to proceed on their plan as carefully, as sparingly of the lives of others as may be; detach a small company, hazarding thereby an algebraically certain scheme at headquarters of victory or secure retreat, which embraced the entire country in its calculations; detach themselves; finally pass into the place, and out again with their prize, themselves secure. Themselves only could have told the details — the intensely pleasant, the glorious sense of movement renewed once more; of defiance, just for once, of a seemingly stupid control; their dismay at finding their company led forward by others, their own posts deserted, their handful of men—nowhere!

In an ordinary trial at law, the motives, every detail of so irregular an act might have been weighed, changing the colour of it. Their general character would have told in their favour, but actually told against them now; they had but won an exceptional trust to betray it. Martial courts exist not for consideration, but for vivid exemplary effect and prompt punishment. "There is a kind of tribunal incidental

to service in the field," writes another diarist, who may tell in his own words what remains to be told. "This court," he says, "may consist of three staff-officers only, but has the power of sentencing to death. On the —st two young officers of the —th regiment, in whom it appears unusual confidence had been placed, were brought before this court, on the charge of desertion and wantonly exposing their company to danger. They were found guilty, and the proper penalty death, to be inflicted next morning before the regiment marches. The delinquents were understood to have appealed to a general court-martial; desperately at last, to 'the judgment of their country'; but were held to have no *locus standi* whatever for an appeal under the actual circumstances. As a civilian I cannot but doubt the justice, whatever may be thought of the expediency, of such a summary process in regard to the capital penalty. The regiment to which the culprits belonged, with some others, was quartered for the night in the *faubourg* of Saint ——, recently under blockade by a portion of our forces. I was awoke at daybreak by the sound of marching. The morning was a particularly clear one, though, as the sun was not yet risen, it looked grey and sad along the empty street, up which a party of grey soldiers were passing with steady pace. I knew for what purpose.

"The whole of the force in garrison here

had already marched to the place of execution, the immense courtyard of a monastery, surrounded irregularly by ancient buildings like those of some cathedral precincts I have seen in England. Here the soldiers then formed three sides of a great square, a grave having been dug on the fourth side. Shortly afterwards the funeral procession came up. First came the band of the —th, playing the Dead March; next the firing party, consisting of twelve non-commissioned officers; then the coffins, followed immediately by the unfortunate prisoners, accompanied by a chaplain. Slowly and sadly did the mournful procession approach, when it passed through three sides of the square, the troops having been previously faced inwards, and then halted opposite to the grave. The proceedings of the court-martial were then read; and the elder prisoner having been blindfolded was ordered to kneel down on his coffin, which had been placed close to the grave, the firing party taking up a position exactly opposite at a few yards' distance. The poor fellow's face was deadly pale, but he had marched his last march as steadily as ever I saw a man step, and bore himself throughout most bravely, though an oddly mixed expression passed over his countenance when he was directed to remove himself from the side of his companion, shaking his hand first. At this moment there was hardly a dry eye, and several young soldiers fainted, numberless as must be

the scenes of horror which even they have witnessed during these last months. At length the chaplain, who had remained praying with the prisoner, quietly withdrew, and at a given signal, but without word of command, the muskets were levelled, a volley was fired, and the body of the unfortunate man sprang up, falling again on his back. One shot had purposely been reserved; and as the presiding officer thought he was not quite dead a musket was placed close to his head and fired. All was now over; but the troops having been formed into columns were marched close by the body as it lay on the ground, after which it was placed in one of the coffins and buried.

"I had almost forgotten his companion, the younger and more fortunate prisoner, though I could scarcely tell, as I looked at him, whether his fate was really preferable in leaving his own rough coffin unoccupied behind him there. Lieutenant (I think Edward) Uthwart, as being the younger of the two offenders, 'by the mercy of the court' had his sentence commuted to dismissal from the army with disgrace. A colour-sergeant than advanced with the former officer's sword, a remarkably fine one, which he thereupon snapped in sunder over the prisoner's head as he knelt. After this the prisoner's regimental coat was handed forward and put upon him, the epaulettes and buttons being then torn off and flung to a distance. This part of

such sentences is almost invariably spared; but, I suppose through unavoidable haste, was on the present occasion somewhat rudely carried out. I shall never forget the expression of this man's countenance, though I have seen many sad things in the course of my profession. He had the sort of good looks which always rivet attention, and in most minds friendly interest; and now, amid all his pain and bewilderment, bore a look of humility and submission as he underwent those extraordinary details of his punishment, which touched me very oddly with a sort of desire (I cannot otherwise express it) to share his lot, to be actually in his place for a moment. Yet, alas! — no! say rather Thank Heaven! the nearest approach to that look I have seen has been on the face of those whom I have known from circumstances to be almost incapable at the time of any feeling whatever. I would have offered him pecuniary aid, supposing he needed it, but it was impossible. I went on with the regiment, leaving the poor wretch to shift for himself, Heaven knows how, the state of the country being what it is. He might join the enemy!"

What money Uthwart had about him had in fact passed that morning into the hands of his guards. To tell what followed would be to accompany him on a roundabout and really aimless journey, the details of which he could never afterwards recall. See him lingering for morsels

of food at some shattered farmstead, or assisted by others almost as wretched as himself, sometimes without his asking. In his worn military dress he seems a part of the ruin under which he creeps for a night's rest as darkness comes on. He actually came round again to the scene of his disgrace, of the execution; looked in vain for the precise spot where he had knelt; then, almost envying him who lay there, for the unmarked grave; passed over it perhaps unrecognised for some change in that terrible place, or rather in himself; wept then as never before in his life; dragged himself on once more, till suddenly the whole country seems to move under the rumour, the very thunder, of "the crowning victory," as he is made to understand. Falling in with the tide of its heroes returning to English shores, his vagrant footsteps are at last directed homewards. He finds himself one afternoon at the gate, turning out of the quiet Sussex road, through the fields for whose safety he had fought with so much of undeniable gallantry and approval.

On that July afternoon the gardens, the woods, mounted in flawless sweetness all round him as he stood, to meet the circle of a flawless sky. Not a cloud; not a motion on the grass! At the first he had intended to return home no more; and it had been a proof of his great dejection that he sent at last, as best he could, for money. They knew his fate already

by report, and were touched naturally when that had followed on the record of his honours. Had it been possible they would have set forth at any risk to meet, to seek him; were waiting now for the weary one to come to the gate, ready with their oil and wine, to speak metaphorically, and from this time forth underwent his charm to the utmost—the charm of an exquisite character, felt in some way to be inseparable from his person, his characteristic movements, touched also now with seemingly irreparable sorrow. For his part, drinking in here the last sweets of the sensible world, it was as if he, the lover of roses, had never before been aware of them at all. The original softness of his temperament, against which the sense of greater things thrust upon him had successfully reacted, asserted itself again now as he lay at ease, the ease well merited by his deeds, his sorrows. That he was going to die moved those about him to humour this mood, to soften all things to his touch; and looking back he might have pronounced those four last years of doom the happiest of his life. The memory of the grave into which he had gazed so steadily on the execution morning, into which, as he feels, one half of himself had then descended, does not lessen his shrinking from the fate before him, yet fortifies him to face it manfully, gives a sort of fraternal familiarity to death; in a few weeks' time this battle too is fought out; it is as if the thing were ended.

The delightful summer heat, the freshness it enhances—he contrasts such things no longer with the sort of place to which he is hastening. The possible duration of life for him was indeed uncertain, the future to some degree indefinite; but as regarded any fairly distant date, anything like a term of years, from the first there had been no doubt at all; he would be no longer here. Meantime it was like a delightful few days' additional holiday from school, with which perforce one must be content at last; or as though he had not been pardoned on that terrible morning, but only reprieved for two or three years. Yet how large a proportion they would have seemed in the whole sum of his years. He would have liked to lie finally in the garden among departed pets, dear dead dogs and horses; faintly proposes it one day; but after a while comprehends the churchyard, with its white spots in the distant flowery view, as filling harmoniously its own proper place there. The weary soul seemed to be settling deeper into the body and the earth it came of, into the condition of the flowers, the grass, proper creatures of the earth to which he is returning. The saintly vicar visits him considerately; is repelled with politeness; goes on his way pondering inwardly what kind of place there might be, in any possible scheme of another world, for so absolutely unspiritual a subject. In fact, as the breath of the infinite world came about him, he clung all

the faster to the beloved finite things still in contact with him; he had successfully hidden from his eyes all beside.

His reprieve however lasted long enough, after all, for a certain change of opinion of immense weight to him—a revision or reversal of judgment. It came about in this way. When peace was arranged, with question of rewards, pensions, and the like, certain battles or incidents therein were fought over again, sometimes in the highest places of debate. On such an occasion a certain speaker cites the case of Lieutenant James Stokes and another, as being "*pessimi exempli*": whereupon a second speaker gets up, prepared with full detail, insists, brings that incidental matter to the front for an hour, tells his unfortunate friend's story so effectively, pathetically, that, as happens with our countrymen, they repent. The matter gets into the newspapers, and, coming thus into sympathetic public view, something like glory wins from Emerald Uthwart his last touch of animation. Just not too late he received the offer of a commission; kept the letter there open within sight. Aldy, who "never shed tears and was incapable of pain," in his great physical weakness, wept—shall we say for the second time in his life? A less excitement would have been more favourable to any chance there might be of the patient's surviving. In fact the old gun-shot wound, wrongly thought to be cured, which had caused

the one illness of his life, is now drawing out what remains of it, as he feels with a kind of odd satisfaction and pride—his old glorious wound! And then, as of old, an absolute submissiveness comes over him, as he gazes round at the place, the relics of his uniform, the letter lying there. It was as if there was nothing more that could be said. Accounts thus settled, he stretched himself in the bed he had occupied as a boy, more completely at his ease than since the day when he had left home for the first time. Respited from death once, he was twice believed to be dead before the date actually registered on his tomb. "What will it matter a hundred years hence?" they used to ask by way of simple comfort in boyish troubles at school, overwhelming at the moment. Was that in truth part of a certain revelation of the inmost truth of things to "babes," such as we have heard of? What did it matter—the gifts, the good-fortune, its terrible withdrawal, the long agony? Emerald Uthwart would have been all but a centenarian to-day.

Postscript, from the Diary of a Surgeon, August —th, 18—.

I was summoned by letter into the country to perform an operation on the dead body of a young man, formerly an officer in the army. The cause of death is held to have been some

kind of distress of mind, concurrent with the effects of an old gun-shot wound, the ball still remaining somewhere in the body. My instructions were to remove this, at the express desire, as I understood, of the deceased, rather than to ascertain the precise cause of death. This however became apparent in the course of my search for the ball, which had enveloped itself in the muscular substance in the region of the heart, and was removed with difficulty. I have known cases of this kind, where anxiety has caused incurable cardiac derangement (the deceased seems to have been actually sentenced to death for some military offence when on service in Flanders), and such mental strain would of course have been aggravated by the presence of a foreign object in that place. On arriving at my destination, a small village in a remote part of Sussex, I proceeded through the little orderly churchyard, where however the monthly roses were blooming all their own way among the formal white marble monuments of the wealthier people of the neighbourhood. At one of these the masons were at work, picking and chipping in the otherwise absolute stillness of the summer afternoon. They were in fact opening the family burial-place of the people who summoned me hither; and the workmen pointed out their abode, conspicuous on the slope beyond, towards which I bent my steps accordingly. I was conducted to a large upper

room or attic, set freely open to sun and air, and found the body lying in a coffin, almost hidden under very rich-scented cut flowers, after a manner I have never seen in this country, except in the case of one or two Catholics laid out for burial. The mother of the deceased was present, and actually assisted my operations, amid such tokens of distress, though perfectly self-controlled, as I fervently hope I may never witness again. Deceased was in his twenty-seventh year, but looked many years younger; had indeed scarcely yet reached the full condition of manhood. The extreme purity of the outlines, both of the face and limbs, was such as is usually found only in quite early youth; the brow especially, under an abundance of fair hair, finely formed, not high, but arched and full, as is said to be the way with those who have the imaginative temper in excess. Sad to think that had he lived reason must have deserted that so worthy abode of it! I was struck by the great beauty of the organic developments, in the strictly anatomic sense; those of the throat and diaphragm in particular might have been modelled for a teacher of normal physiology, or a professor of design. The flesh was still almost as firm as that of a living person; as happens when, as in this case, death comes to all intents and purposes as gradually as in old age. This expression of health and life, under my seemingly merciless doings, together with the mother's distress, touched me to a degree very

unusual, I conceive, in persons of my years and profession. Though I believed myself to be acting by his express wish, I felt like a criminal. The ball, a small one, much corroded with blood, was at length removed; and I was then directed to wrap it in a partly-printed letter, or other document, and place it in the breast-pocket of a faded and much-worn scarlet soldier's coat, put over the shirt which enveloped the body. The flowers were then hastily replaced, the hands and the peak of the handsome nose remaining visible among them; the wind ruffled the fair hair a little; the lips were still red. I shall not forget it. The lid was then placed on the coffin and screwed down in my presence. There was no plate or other inscription upon it.

DIAPHANEITÈ

THERE are some unworldly types of character which the world is able to estimate. It recognises certain moral types, or categories, and regards whatever falls within them as having a right to exist. The saint, the artist, even the speculative thinker, out of the world's order as they are, yet work, so far as they work at all, in and by means of the main current of the world's energy. Often it gives them late, or scanty, or mistaken acknowledgment; still it has room for them in its scheme of life, a place made ready for them in its affections. It is also patient of doctrinaires of every degree of littleness. As if dimly conscious of some great sickness and weariness of heart in itself, it turns readily to those who theorise about its unsoundness. To constitute one of these categories, or types, a breadth and generality of character is required. There is another type of character, which is not broad and general, rare, precious above all to the artist, a character which seems to have been the supreme moral charm in the Beatrice of the

Commedia. It does not take the eye by breadth of colour; rather it is that fine edge of light, where the elements of our moral nature refine themselves to the burning point. It crosses rather than follows the main current of the world's life. The world has no sense fine enough for those evanescent shades, which fill up the blanks between contrasted types of character—delicate provision in the organisation of the moral world for the transmission to every part of it of the life quickened at single points! For this nature there is no place ready in its affections. This colourless, unclassified purity of life it can neither use for its service, nor contemplate as an ideal.

"Sibi unitus et simplificatus esse," that is the long struggle of the Imitatio Christi. The spirit which it forms is the very opposite of that which regards life as a game of skill, and values things and persons as marks or counters of something to be gained, or achieved, beyond them. It seeks to value everything at its eternal worth, not adding to it, or taking from it, the amount of influence it may have for or against its own special scheme of life. It is the spirit that sees external circumstances as they are, its own power and tendencies as they are, and realises the given conditions of its life, not disquieted by the desire for change, or the preference of one part in life rather than another, or passion, or opinion. The character we mean to indicate achieves this

perfect life by a happy gift of nature, without any struggle at all. Not the saint only, the artist also, and the speculative thinker, confused, jarred, disintegrated in the world, as sometimes they inevitably are, aspire for this simplicity to the last. The struggle of this aspiration with a lower practical aim in the mind of Savonarola has been subtly traced by the author of Romola. As language, expression, is the function of intellect, as art, the supreme expression, is the highest product of intellect, so this desire for simplicity is a kind of indirect self-assertion of the intellectual part of such natures. Simplicity in purpose and act is a kind of determinate expression in dexterous outline of one's personality. It is a kind of moral expressiveness; there is an intellectual triumph implied in it. Such a simplicity is characteristic of the repose of perfect intellectual culture. The artist and he who has treated life in the spirit of art desires only to be shown to the world as he really is; as he comes nearer and nearer to perfection, the veil of an outer life not simply expressive of the inward becomes thinner and thinner. This intellectual throne is rarely won. Like the religious life, it is a paradox in the world, denying the first conditions of man's ordinary existence, cutting obliquely the spontaneous order of things. But the character we have before us is a kind of prophecy of this repose and simplicity, coming as it were in the order of grace, not of nature, by

some happy gift, or accident of birth or constitution, showing that it is indeed within the limits of man's destiny. Like all the higher forms of inward life this character is a subtle blending and interpenetration of intellectual, moral and spiritual elements. But it is as a phase of intellect, of culture, that it is most striking and forcible. It is a mind of taste lighted up by some spiritual ray within. What is meant by taste is an imperfect intellectual state; it is but a sterile kind of culture. It is the mental attitude, the intellectual manner of perfect culture, assumed by a happy instinct. Its beautiful way of handling everything that appeals to the senses and the intellect is really directed by the laws of the higher intellectual life, but while culture is able to trace those laws, mere taste is unaware of them. In the character before us, taste, without ceasing to be instructive, is far more than a mental attitude or manner. A magnificent intellectual force is latent within it. It is like the reminiscence of a forgotten culture that once adorned the mind; as if the mind of one *φιλοσοφήσας ποτε μετ' ἔρωτος*, fallen into a new cycle, were beginning its spiritual progress over again, but with a certain power of anticipating its stages. It has the freshness without the shallowness of taste, the range and seriousness of culture without its strain and over-consciousness. Such a habit may be described as wistfulness of mind, the feeling that there is "so much to

know," rather as a longing after what is unattainable, than as a hope to apprehend. Its ethical result is an intellectual guilelessness, or integrity, that instinctively prefers what is direct and clear, lest one's own confusion and intransparency should hinder the transmission from without of light that is not yet inward. He who is ever looking for the breaking of a light he knows not whence about him, notes with a strange heedfulness the faintest paleness in the sky. That truthfulness of temper, that receptivity, which professors often strive in vain to form, is engendered here less by wisdom than by innocence. Such a character is like a relic from the classical age, laid open by accident to our alien modern atmosphere. It has something of the clear ring, the eternal outline of the antique. Perhaps it is nearly always found with a corresponding outward semblance. The veil or mask of such a nature would be the very opposite of the "dim blackguardism" of Danton, the type Carlyle has made too popular for the true interest of art. It is just this sort of entire transparency of nature that lets through unconsciously all that is really lifegiving in the established order of things; it detects without difficulty all sorts of affinities between its own elements, and the nobler elements in that order. But then its wistfulness and a confidence in perfection it has makes it love the lords of change. What makes revolutionists is either self-pity, or indignation

for the sake of others, or a sympathetic perception of the dominant undercurrent of progress in things. The nature before us is revolutionist from the direct sense of personal worth, that χλιδή, that pride of life, which to the Greek was a heavenly grace. How can he value what comes of accident, or usage, or convention, whose individual life nature itself has isolated and perfected? Revolution is often impious. They who prosecute revolution have to violate again and again the instinct of reverence. That is inevitable, since after all progress is a kind of violence. But in this nature revolutionism is softened, harmonised, subdued as by distance. It is the revolutionism of one who has slept a hundred years. Most of us are neutralised by the play of circumstances. To most of us only one chance is given in the life of the spirit and the intellect, and circumstances prevent our dexterously seizing that one chance. The one happy spot in our nature has no room to burst into life. Our collective life, pressing equally on every part of every one of us, reduces nearly all of us to the level of a colourless uninteresting existence. Others are neutralised, not by suppression of gifts, but by just equipoise among them. In these no single gift, or virtue, or idea, has an unmusical predominance. The world easily confounds these two conditions. It sees in the character before us only indifferentism. Doubtless the chief vein of the life of humanity

could hardly pass through it. Not by it could the progress of the world be achieved. It is not the guise of Luther or Spinoza; rather it is that of Raphael, who in the midst of the Reformation and the Renaissance, himself lighted up by them, yielded himself to neither, but stood still to live upon himself, even in outward form a youth, almost an infant, yet surprising all the world. The beauty of the Greek statues was a sexless beauty; the statues of the gods had the least traces of sex. Here there is a moral sexlessness, a kind of impotence, an ineffectual wholeness of nature, yet with a divine beauty and significance of its own.

Over and over again the world has been surprised by the heroism, the insight, the passion, of this clear crystal nature. Poetry and poetical history have dreamed of a crisis, where it must needs be that some human victim be sent down into the grave. These are they whom in its profound emotion humanity might choose to send. "What," says Carlyle, of Charlotte Corday, "What if she had emerged from her secluded stillness, suddenly like a star; cruel-lovely, with half-angelic, half-dæmonic splendour; to gleam for a moment, and in a moment be extinguished; to be held in memory, so bright complete was she, through long centuries!"

Often the presence of this nature is felt like a sweet aroma in early manhood. Afterwards, as the adulterated atmosphere of the world assimi-

lates us to itself, the savour of it faints away. Perhaps there are flushes of it in all of us; recurring moments of it in every period of life. Certainly this is so with every man of genius. It is a thread of pure white light that one might disentwine from the tumultuary richness of Goethe's nature. It is a natural prophecy of what the next generation will appear, renerved, modified by the ideas of this. There is a violence, an impossibility about men who have ideas, which makes one suspect that they could never be the type of any widespread life. Society could not be conformed to their image but by an unlovely straining from its true order. Well, in this nature the idea appears softened, harmonised as by distance, with an engaging naturalness, without the noise of axe or hammer.

People have often tried to find a type of life that might serve as a basement type. The philosopher, the saint, the artist, neither of them can be this type; the order of nature itself makes them exceptional. It cannot be the pedant, or the conservative, or anything rash and irreverent. Also the type must be one discontented with society as it is. The nature here indicated alone is worthy to be this type. A majority of such would be the regeneration of the world.

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